

A Book of Poetry
from Spenser to Bridges



A. WATSON BAIN

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A BOOK OF POETRY

FROM SPENSER TO BRIDGES

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A BOOK OF POETRY
FROM SPENSER TO BRIDGES

Compiled by
A. WATSON BAIN




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To
MY WIFE



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P R E F A C E

THIS book, whose contents represent the main stream of English poetry from Spenser to the present day, is intended for readers from fourteen or fifteen upwards. Apart from a single passage from Marlowe, three from Shakespeare, and the closing lines of *Prometheus Unbound*, it contains no dramatic verse. Everyone reads at least one play of Shakespeare at school—many read more—and any attempt to give extracts representative of his work and of that of his fellow dramatists, even if advisable, which is at least doubtful, would have unduly increased the size of the book. Most other types of poetry are represented. The description of Acrasia's bower from *The Faery Queene* is probably the most musical piece of English ever written; and some of the lyrics touch the topmost peaks of our literature. Chaucer is not included, as his vocabulary and grammar require special study and cannot be modernized without essential loss; while the appeal of Spenser and the other Elizabethans is not weakened in any way by presenting them in modern dress, as is our common practice with Shakespeare. There are three free translations, from Greek, Gaelic, and Irish respectively, which have the merit of originals. One or two poems are lacking owing to copyright restrictions, and three or four owing to considerations of space. With a few obvious exceptions, all that appear are given in full.

It has been considered advisable to place the sonnets (some three dozen in all) together towards the end of the book, as has been done in the Editor's *French Poetry for Students* (Macmillan): the group, while not professing to be the best sonnets in the language, does actually contain many of the most famous. The final

section consists of eight short poems expressive of the attitude of their authors towards man's final journey.

If it should be urged that modern work bulks too largely, the answer would be that, as a rule, it is more interesting to youthful readers, for whom the book has primarily been planned, and that, once interest in poetry has been aroused, the older writers afford a wide and open field for subsequent reading and study.

The main aim of the book, as of the two preceding it, is to give emotional and intellectual pleasure and to stimulate in its readers a real love of poetry. Those—it is hoped they may be many—who are encouraged by this book to farther travel in the enchanted wood have many pleasant paths to chose from, full of infinite variety and of infinite delight.

A. W. B.

April 6, 1928

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*Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the rose
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes.*

SIR WILLIAM WATSON



Prothalamion

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play—
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
When I (whom sullen care,
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In princes' court, and expectation vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain)
Walk'd forth to ease my pain
Along the shore of silver-streaming Thames;
Whose rutty bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meads adorn'd with dainty gems
Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

There in a meadow by the river's side
A flock of nymphs I chancèd to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untied,
As each had been a bride;
And each one had a little wicker basket
Made of fine twigs, entrailèd curiously.
In which they gather'd flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalks on high.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew

They gather'd some; the violet, pallid blue,
The little daisy that at evening closes,
The virgin lily and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

With that I saw two Swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the Lee;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strow
Did never whiter show,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was (they say) as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
So purely white they were
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seem'd foul to them, and bade his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair,
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as Heaven's light
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood
As they came floating on the crystal flood;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazèd still
Their wondering eyes to fill;
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fair
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem

flasket=long shallow basket

feateously=daintily

Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed,
But rather Angels or of Angels' breed;
Yet were they bred of summer's heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Ev'n as their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore
Scatter'd with flowers through Thessaly they stream,
That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store,
Like a bride's chamber-floor.
Two of those nymphs meanwhile two garlands bound
Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
The which, presenting all in trim array,
Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crown'd;
Whilst one did sing this lay
Prepared against that day,
Against their bridal day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle birds! the world's fair ornament,
And Heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
Joy may you have, and gentle heart's content

Of your love's couplement;
And let fair Venus, that is queen of love,
With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
For ever to assoil.
Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessèd plenty wait upon your board;
And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
That fruitful issue may to you afford
Which may your foes confound,
And make your joys redound
Upon your bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song."

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong,
Which said their bridal day should not be long;
And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.
So forth those joyous birds did pass along
Adown the Lee that to them murmur'd low,
As he would speak but that he lack'd a tongue;
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow.
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excel
The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they, enrangèd well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

assoil = absolve, pardon

shend = outshine

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native source,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of ancient fame:
There when they came, whereas those bricky towers
The which on Thames' broad agèd back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilom wont the Templar knights to bide,
Till they decay'd through pride;
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gainèd gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case;
But ah! here fits not well
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great England's glory and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear:
Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry!
That fillest England with thy triumphs' fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowess and victorious arms
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave Muse may sing

To ages following,
Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper when his golden hair
In th' ocean billows he hath bathèd fair,
Descended to the river's open viewing
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queen,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Jove they seem'd in sight
Which deck the baldrick of the Heavens bright;
They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
Received those two fair brides, their love's delight;
Which, at th' appointed tide,
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal day, which is not long:
Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

SPENSER

God's Ministering Angels

AND is there care in heaven? And is there love
In heavenly spirits to these creatures base,
That may compassion of their evils move?
There is: else much more wretched were the case
Of men than beasts. But O! th' exceeding grace
Of Highest God, that loves His creatures so,
And all His works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessèd angels He sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked man, to serve His wicked foe!

How oft do they their silver bowers leave
To come to succour us, that succour want!
How oft do they with golden pinions cleave
The flitting skies, like flitting pursuivant,
Against foul fiends to aid us militant!
They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
And their bright squadrons round about us plant;
And all for love, and nothing for reward:
O! why should heavenly God to men have such regard?

SPENSER

The Bower of Bliss

EFTSOONS they heard a most melodious sound
Of all that might delight a dainty ear,
Such as at once might not on living ground,
Save in this paradise, be heard elsewhere:
Right hard it was for wight which did it hear
To read what manner music that might be;
For all that pleasing is to living ear
Was there consorted in one harmony:
Birds, voices, instruments, winds, waters all agree.

The joyous birds shrouded in cheerful shade
Their notes unto the voice attemper'd sweet;
Th' angelical soft trembling voices made
To th' instruments divine response meet;
The silver sounding instruments did meet
With the bass murmur of the water's fall;
The water's fall with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call;
The gentle warbling wind low answerèd to all.

The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay:
Ah see, who so fair thing dost fain to see,
In springing flower the image of thy day;
Ah see the virgin rose, how sweetly she
Doth first peep forth with bashful modesty,
That fairer seems the less ye see her may;
Lo see soon after how more bold and free
Her barèd bosom she doth broad display;
Lo see soon after how she fades and falls away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortal life the leaf, the bud, the flower,
Nor more doth flourish after first decay,
That erst was sought to deck both bed and bower
Of many a lady and many a paramour;
Gather therefore the rose whilst yet is prime,
For soon comes age, that will her pride deflower;
Gather the rose of love, whilst yet is time,
Whilst loving thou mayst lovèd be with equal crime.

SPENSER

Helen

WAS this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burned the topless towers of Ilium?—
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss!—
Her lips suck forth my soul: see where it flees!—
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven is in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.
I will be Paris, and for love of thee,
Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sacked,
And I will combat with weak Menelaus
And wear thy colours on my plumèd crest;
Yes, I will wound Achilles in the heel,

And then return to Helen for a kiss.
Oh, thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars;
Brighter art thou than flaming Jupiter
When he appeared to hapless Semele;
More lovely than the monarch of the sky
In wanton Arethusa's azured arms;
And none but thou shalt be my paramour!

MARLOWE

The Passionate Shepherd to his Love

COME live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

MARLOWE

The Nymph's Reply

IF all the world and love were young,
And truth in every shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move
To live with thee and be thy Love.
But Time drives flocks from field to fold,
When rivers rage and rocks grow cold;
And Philomel becometh dumb;
The rest complain of cares to come.
The flowers do fade, and wanton fields
To wayward winter reckoning yields:
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.
Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of roses,
Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies
Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten—
In folly ripe, in reason rotten!
Thy belt of straw and ivy buds,
Thy coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy Love.
But could youth last, and love still heed,
Had joys no date, nor age no need,
Then these delights my mind might move
To live with thee and be thy Love.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

His Pilgrimage

GIVE me my scallop-shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage.
Blood must be my body's balmer;
No other balm will there be given;
Whilst my soul, like quiet palmer,
Travelleth towards the land of heaven;
Over the silver mountains,
Where spring the nectar fountains:
There will I kiss
The bowl of bliss,
And drink mine everlasting fill
Upon every milken hill.
My soul will be a-dry before;
But after it will thirst no more.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

Lines before Death

EVEN such is Time, that takes in trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days;
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

The Inconstant Nymph

TAKE, O, take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworn;
And those eyes, the break of day,
Lights that do mislead the morn!
But my kisses bring again,
Seals of love, but sealed in vain. SHAKESPEARE

Men's Inconstancy

SIGH no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy:
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey nonny, nonny. SHAKESPEARE

A Lover's Song

O MISTRESS mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear! your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweeting;
Journeys end in lovers meeting—
Every wise man's son doth know.

What is love? 'tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty!
Youth's a stuff will not endure. SHAKESPEARE

A Lover's Lament

COME away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death no one so true
Did share it.
Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
On my black coffin let there be strown;
Not a friend, not a friend greet
My poor corse, where my bones shall be thrown:
A thousand thousand sighs to save,
Lay me, O, where
Sad true lover never find my grave,
To weep there! SHAKESPEARE

England

THIS royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-Paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,

Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessèd plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,
Feared by their breed and famous by their birth,
Renownèd for their deeds as far from home,—
For Christian service and true chivalry,—
As is the sepulchre in stubborn Jewry
Of the world's ransom, blessèd Mary's Son:
This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land.

SHAKESPEARE

Mercy

THE quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes;
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings;
It is an attribute to God Himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

SHAKESPEARE

The End of the Play

OUR revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
Are melted into air, into thin air;

And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep. SHAKESPEARE

Age and Youth

CRABBÈD Age and Youth
Cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance,
Age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn,
Age like winter weather;
Youth like summer brave,
Age like winter bare.
Youth is full of sport,
Age's breath is short;
Youth is nimble, Age is lame;
Youth is hot and bold,
Age is weak and cold;
Youth is wild and Age is tame.
Age, I do abhor thee;
Youth, I do adore thee;
O, my Love, my Love is young!
Age, I do defy thee;
O, sweet shepherd, hie thee!
For methinks thou stay'st too long.
(From *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599)

Tears

WEEP you no more, sad fountains;

What need you flow so fast?

Look how the snowy mountains

Heaven's sun doth gently waste!

But my Sun's heavenly eyes

View not your weeping,

That now lies sleeping

Softly, now softly lies

Sleeping.

Sleep is a reconciling,

A rest that peace begets;

Doth not the sun rise smiling

When fair at even he sets?

Rest you then, rest, sad eyes!

Melt not in weeping,

While she lies sleeping

Softly, now softly lies

Sleeping.

(From Dowland's *Book of Songs and Airs*, 1603)

Sister, Awake!

SISTER, awake! close not your eyes!

The day her light discloses,

And the bright morning doth arise

Out of her bed of roses.

See the clear sun, the world's bright eye,

In at our window peeping:

Lo, how he blusheth to espy

Us idle wenches sleeping!

Therefore awake! make haste, I say,
And let us, without staying,
All in our gowns of green so gay
Into the Park a-maying!

(From Bateson's *English Madrigals*, 1604)

Preparations

YET if His Majesty, our sovereign lord,
Should of his own accord
Friendly himself invite,
And say "I'll be your guest to-morrow night,"
How should we stir ourselves, call and command
All hands to work! "Let no man idle stand!
"Set me fine Spanish tables in the hall;
See they be fitted all;
Let there be room to eat
And order taken that there want no meat.
See every sconce and candlestick made bright,
That without tapers they may give a light.
"Look to the presence: are the carpets spread,
The dazie o'er the head,
The cushions in the chairs,
And all the candles lighted on the stairs?
Perfume the chambers, and in any case
Let each man give attendance in his place!"
Thus, if a king were coming, would we do;
And 'twere good reason too;
For 'tis a duteous thing
To show all honour to an earthly king,
And after all our travail and our cost,
So he be pleased, to think no labour lost.

But at the coming of the King of Heaven
All's set at six and seven;
We wallow in our sin,
Christ cannot find a chamber in the inn.
We entertain Him always like a stranger,
And, as at first, still lodge Him in the manger.
(From Christ Church MS.)

The Man of Life Upright

THE man of life upright,
Whose guiltless heart is free
From all dishonest deeds
Or thought of vanity;

The man whose silent days
In harmless joys are spent,
Whom hopes cannot delude,
Nor sorrow discontent—

That man needs neither towers
Nor armour for defence,
Nor secret vaults to fly
From thunder's violence.

He only can behold
With unaffrighted eyes
The horrors of the deep
And terrors of the skies.

Thus, scorning all the cares
That fate or fortune brings,
He makes the heaven his book,
His wisdom heavenly things.

Good thoughts his only friends,
His wealth a well-spent age,
The earth his sober inn
And quiet pilgrimage.

THOMAS CAMPION

The Happy Life

How happy is he born and taught
That serveth not another's will;
Whose armour is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill;
Whose passions not his masters are;
Whose soul is still prepared for death,
Untied unto the world by care
Of public fame or private breath;
Who envies none that chance doth raise,
Or vice; who never understood
How deepest wounds are given by praise;
Nor rules of state, but rules of good;
Who hath his life from rumours freed;
Whose conscience is his strong retreat;
Whose state can neither flatterers feed,
Nor ruin make oppressors great;
Who God doth, late and early, pray
More of His grace than gifts to lend,
And entertains the harmless day
With a religious book or friend!
This man is freed from servile bands
Of hope to rise or fear to fall—
Lord of himself, though not of lands—
And, having nothing, yet hath all.

SIR HENRY WOTTON

To the Memory of Shakespeare

THE applause, delight, the wonder of our stage,
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read and praise to give.
For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.
And, though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,
From thence, to honour thee, I will not seek
For names, but call forth thundering Æschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us. . . .
Triumph, my Britain! Thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!

BEN JONSON

The Noble Nature

It is not growing like a tree,
In bulk, doth make men better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night;
It was the plant and flower of light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

BEN JONSON

Epitaph for Sir John Hawkins

THE Waters were his Winding-sheet, the Sea was made
his Tomb;

Yet for his fame the Ocean Sea was not sufficient room.

RICHARD BARNFIELD

To Blossoms

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth
Merely to show your worth,
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave;
And after they have shown their pride,
Like you, awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

HERRICK

To the Virgins to make much of Time

GATHER ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying ;
And this same flower that smiles to-day,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best, which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer ;
But, being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And, while ye may, go marry :
For, having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry. HERRICK

To Anthea, who may command him anything

BID me to live, and I will live
Thy Protestant to be :
Or bid me love, and I will give
A loving heart to thee.

A heart as soft, a heart as kind,
A heart as sound and free,
As in the whole world thou canst find,
That heart I'll give to thee.

Bid that heart stay, and it will stay,
To honour thy decree :
Or bid it languish quite away,
And 't shall do so for thee.

Bid me to weep, and I will weep,
While I have eyes to see;
And, having none, yet I will keep
A heart to weep for thee.

Bid me despair, and I'll despair
Under that cypress tree;
Or bid me die, and I will dare
E'en death, to die for thee.

Thou art my life, my love, my heart,
The very eyes of me,
And hast command of every part,
To live and die for thee.

HERRICK

The Best Beloved

E'EN like two little bank-dividing brooks,
That wash the pebbles with their wanton streams,
And having ranged and searched a thousand nooks,
Meet both at length in silver-breasted Thames,
Where in a greater current they conjoin:
So I my Best-Belovèd's am; so He is mine.

E'en so we met; and, after long pursuit,
E'en so we join'd; we both became entire;
No need for either to renew a suit,

For I was flax and He was flames of fire:
Our firm-united souls did more than twine;
So I my Best-Belovèd's am; so He is mine.

If all those glittering Monarchs that command
The servile quarters of this earthly ball
Should tender, in exchange, their shares of land,

I would not change my fortunes for them all:
Their wealth is but a counter to my coin:
The world's but theirs; but my Belovèd's mine.

FRANCIS QUARLES

Virtue

SWEET day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky,
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night;
For thou must die.

Sweet rose, whose hue angry and brave
Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
Thy root is ever in its grave,
And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
A box where sweets compacted lie;
My music shows ye have your closes,
And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
Like seasoned timber, never gives,
But, though the whole world turn to coal,
Then chiefly lives. GEORGE HERBERT

Song

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fading rose;
For in your beauty's orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

Ask me no more whither do stray
The golden atoms of the day;
For in pure love heaven did prepare
Those powders to enrich your hair.

Ask me no more whither doth haste
The nightingale when May is past;
For in your sweet dividing throat
She winters and keeps warm her note.

Ask me no more where those stars 'light
That downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fixèd become as in their sphere.

Ask me no more if east or west
The phoenix builds her spicy nest;
For unto you at last she flies,
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

THOMAS CAREW

Death the Leveller

THE glories of our blood and state
Are shadows, not substantial things.

There is no armour against fate;
Death lays his icy hand on kings.

Sceptre and crown
Must tumble down,
And in the dust be equal made
With the poor crookèd scythe and spade.

Some men with swords may reap the field,
And plant fresh laurels where they kill;
But their strong nerves at last must yield;
They tame but one another still.

Early or late
They stoop to fate,
And must give up their murmuring breath
When they, pale captives, creep to death.

The garlands wither on your brow;
Then boast no more your mighty deeds.
Upon Death's purple altar now
See where the victor-victim bleeds.

Your heads must come
To the cold tomb:
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in their dust.

JAMES SHIRLEY

The Rose Messenger

Go, lovely Rose—
Tell her, that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows,
When I resemble her to thee,
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

Tell her, that's young
And shuns to have her graces spied,
That, hadst thou sprung
In deserts where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended died.

Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retired:
Bid her come forth,
Suffer herself to be desired,
And not blush so to be admired.

Then die—that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share
That are so wondrous sweet and fair.

EDMUND WALLER

Hymn on the Morning of Christ's Nativity

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the Sun, her lusty paramour.
Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden-white to throw,
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.
But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.
No war or battle's sound
Was heard the world around;
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hookèd chariot stood,
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armèd throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild oceän,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence,
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The Sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlightened world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne or burning axletree could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or ere the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they than
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook,
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringèd noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature, that heard such sound
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling:
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier uniön.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shame-faced Night arrayed:
The helmèd Cherubim
And sworded Seraphim
Are seen, in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
Harping, in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced World on hinges hung,
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
Once bless our human ears,
—If ye have power to touch our senses so—
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow,
And with your ninefold harmony
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says No,
This must not yet be so,
The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss,
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first, to those ychained in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the
deep,

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake :
The agèd earth, aghast
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day
The old Dragon under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway,
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the archèd roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance or breathèd spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring, and dale
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice battered god of Palestine;
And moonèd Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn;
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain, with timbrelled anthems dark,
The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels, from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand ;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn ;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine :
Our Babe, to shew his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling-bands control the damnèd crew.

So when the Sun in bed,
Curtained with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,
And the yellow-skirted fays
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.

But see! the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest :
Time is our tedious song should here have ending ;
Heaven's youngest-teemèd star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending ;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed angels sit in order serviceable. MILTON

Lycidas

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear

Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer!
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And, as he passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering
wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered to the oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,

With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.

The willows and the hazel copses green

Shall now no more be seen

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

As killing as the canker to the rose,

Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,

Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,

When first the white-thorn blows;

Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?

For neither were ye playing on the steep

Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.

Ay me! I fondly dream

"Had ye been there"...for what could that have
done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,

The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,

Whom universal nature did lament,

When by the rout that made the hideous roar

His gory visage down the stream was sent,

Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care

To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade,

And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?

Were it not better done, as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,

Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise

(That last infirmity of noble mind)

To scorn delights and live laborious days;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea.
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beakèd promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.

“Ah! who hath reft,” quoth he, “my dearest pledge?”
Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain);
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
“How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies’ sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers’ feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to
hold

A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman’s art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.”

Return, Alpheus! the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams. Return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues!
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,

That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding
seas

Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold—
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth;
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth!

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor!
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high

Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey:
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay.
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

MILTON

On Shakespeare

WHAT needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in pilèd stones?
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst to the shame of slow-endeavouring art
Thy easy numbers flow, and that each heart

Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took,
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepulchred in such pomp dost lie,
That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

MILTON

Eve to Adam

SWEET is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train.
But neither breath of morn when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.

MILTON

A Ballad upon a Wedding

I TELL thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest things have seen,
O, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st) do sell our hay,
 There is a house with stairs;
And there did I see, coming down,
Such folks as are not in our town,
 Forty at least, in pairs.

Among the rest, one pestilent fine
(His beard no bigger, tho', than thine)
 Walked on before the rest.
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The King (God bless him!) 't would undo him,
 Should he go still so drest.

But wot you what? the youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing;
 The parson for him stayed.
Yet, by his leave (for all his haste),
He did not so much wish all past
 (Perchance) as did the maid.

The maid (and thereby hangs a tale)
For such a maid no Whitsun-ale
 Could ever yet produce;
No grape, that's kindly ripe, could be
So round, so plump, so soft as she,
 Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on, which they did bring,
 It was too wide a peck:
And to say truth (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar (just)
 About our young colt's neck.

Her feet, beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But O she dances such a way!
No sun upon an Easter-day
Is half so fine a sight.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison
(Who sees them is undone);
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Catharine pear
The side that's next the sun.

Her lips were red, and one was thin,
Compared to that was next her chin
(Some bee had stung it newly);
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze
Than on the sun in July.

.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Healts first go round, and then the house,
The bride's came thick and thick.
And when 't was named another's health,
Perhaps he made it hers by stealth;
And who could help it, Dick?

On the sudden up they rise and dance;
Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
Then dance again and kiss.
Thus several ways the time did pass,
Whilst every woman wished her place,
And every man wished his.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING

The Shepherd's Song

WE saw thee in thy balmy nest,
Young dawn of our eternal day;
We saw thine eyes break from the east,
And chase the trembling shades away:
We saw thee, and we blessed the sight;
We saw thee by thine own sweet light.

Poor world, said I, what wilt thou do
To entertain this starry stranger?
Is this the best thou canst bestow—
A cold and not too cleanly manger?
Contend, the powers of heaven and earth,
To fit a bed for this huge birth.

Proud world, said I, cease your contest,
And let the mighty babe alone;
The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest,
Love's architecture is his own.
The Babe, whose birth embraves this morn,
Made His own bed ere He was born.

RICHARD CRASHAW

To Lucasta on going to the Wars

TELL me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field,
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

RICHARD LOVELACE

To Althea from Prison

WHEN Love with unconfinèd wings
Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair
And fetter'd to her eye,
The birds that wanton in the air
Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be,
Enlargèd winds, that curl the flood,
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.

RICHARD LOVELACE

A Wish

THIS only grant me, that my means may lie
Too low for envy, for contempt too high.
Some honour I would have,
Not from great deeds, but good alone.
The unknown are better than ill known;
Rumour can ope the grave.
Acquaintance I would have, but when 't depends
Not on the number, but the choice of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,
And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.

My house, a cottage more
Than palace, and should fitting be
For all my use, not luxury.

My garden painted o'er
With nature's hands, not art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space,
For he that runs it well twice runs his race.

And in this true delight,
The unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear nor wish my fate,
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

ABRAHAM COWLEY

Thoughts in a Garden

FAIR Quiet, have I found thee here,
And Innocence thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men:
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only among the plants will grow:
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

When we have run our passion's heat,
Love hither makes his best retreat:
The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
Still in a tree did end their race;
Apollo hunted Daphne so
Only that she might laurel grow;
And Pan did after Syrinx speed
Not as a nymph, but for a reed.

What wondrous life is this I lead!
Ripe apples drop about my head;
The luscious clusters of the vine
Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
The nectarine and curious peach
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on melons, as I pass,
Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness;
The mind, that ocean where each kind
Does straight its own resemblance find;
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
Or at some fruit-tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest aside,
My soul into the boughs does glide;
There, like a bird, it sits and sings,
Then whets and combs its silver wings,
And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.

ANDREW MARVELL

Peace

MY Soul, there is a country
Far beyond the stars,
Where stands a wingèd sentry
All skilful in the wars:
There, above noise and danger,
Sweet Peace sits crowned with smiles,
And One born in a manger
Commands the beauteous files.
He is thy gracious Friend,
And—O my Soul, awake!—
Did in pure love descend
To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst get but thither,
There grows the flower of Peace,
The Rose that cannot wither,
Thy fortress, and thy ease.
Leave then thy foolish ranges,
For none can thee secure
But One who never changes,
Thy God, thy life, thy cure.

HENRY VAUGHAN

The Ways of Wisdom

THESE sweeter far than lilies are,
No roses may with these compare:
How these excel
No tongue can tell,
Which he that well and truly knows
With praise and joy he goes!
How great and happy's he that knows his ways
To be divine and heavenly joys;
To whom each city is more brave
Than walls of pearl, and streets which gold doth pave;
Whose open eyes
Behold the skies;
Who loves their wealth and beauty more
Than kings love golden ore!
Who sees the heavenly ancient ways
Of God the Lord, with joy and praise
More than the skies,
With open eyes
Doth prize them all; yea, more than gems
And regal diadems;
That more esteemeth mountains, as they are,
Than if they gold and silver were;

To whom the sun more pleasure brings
Than crowns and thrones and palaces to kings;
 That knows his ways
 To be the joys
And way of God. These things who knows
 With joy and praise he goes.

THOMAS TRAHERNE

A Song for Saint Cecilia's Day

FROM harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
 When Nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
 And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
 "Arise, ye more than dead!"
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry
 In order to their stations leap,
 And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
 This universal frame began:
 From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
 When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
 His listening brethren stood around,
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
 To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell,
 That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangour
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, Hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat!

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful dame.

But O! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race,
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre;
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appeared,
Mistaking Earth for Heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the blest above;
So, when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky. DRYDEN

Milton

THREE poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next, in majesty; in both, the last.
The force of Nature could no further go:
To make a third, she joined the former two. DRYDEN

The Music of the Spheres

THE spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
Th' unwearied Sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.
Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening Earth
Repeats the story of her birth;

Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice,
For ever singing as they shine,
"The Hand that made us is divine."

JOSEPH ADDISON

Ode on Solitude

HAPPY the man whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire;
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day,

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mixed; sweet recreation;
And innocence, which most does please
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie. POPE

A little Learning

A LITTLE learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring:
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.
Fired at first sight with what the muse imparts,
In fearless youth we tempt the heights of arts,
While from the bounded level of our mind
Short views we take, nor see the lengths behind;
But more advanced, behold with strange surprise
New distant scenes of endless science rise!
So pleased at first the tow'ring Alps we try,
Mount o'er the vales, and seem to tread the sky,
Th' eternal snows appear already past,
And the first clouds and mountains seem the last;
But, those attained, we tremble to survey
The growing labours of the lengthened way,
Th' increasing prospect tires our wand'ring eyes,
Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise! POPE

Newton

NATURE and Nature's laws lay hid in Night:
God said "Let Newton be," and all was Light. POPE

Shakespeare

EACH change of many-coloured life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
 Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
 The short and simple annals of the poor.
The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour:
 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.
Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
 If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisles and fretted vault
 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.
Can storied urn or animated bust
 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
 Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?
Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
 Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,
 Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.
But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.
Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.
Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast
 The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,
Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,
The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.
Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.
Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.
Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered Muse,
The place of fane and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.
For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing ling'ring look behind?
On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured Dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
“Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

“There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

“One morn I missed him on the customary hill,
Along the heath, and near his favourite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

“The next, with dirges due in sad array
Slow thro’ the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.”

THE EPITAPH

*Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.*

*Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.
No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose,)
The bosom of his Father and his God.*

GRAY

Dirge for Fidele

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing Spring.
No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.
No withered witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
The female fays shall haunt the green
And dress thy grave with pearly dew!
The redbreast oft at evening hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.
When howling winds and beating rain
In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell;

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Beloved till life can charm no more,
And mourned till Pity's self be dead.

COLLINS

To Mary

THE twentieth year is well-nigh past
Since first our sky was overcast;
Ah, would that this might be the last!
My Mary!

Thy spirits have a fainter flow,
I see thee daily weaker grow—
'Twas my distress that brought thee low,
My Mary!

Thy needles, once a shining store,
For my sake restless heretofore,
Now rust disused, and shine no more;
My Mary!

For though thou gladly wouldst fulfil
The same kind office for me still,
Thy sight now seconds not thy will,
My Mary!

But well thou play'dst the housewife's part,
And all thy threads with magic art
Have wound themselves about this heart,
My Mary!

Thy indistinct expressions seem
Like language uttered in a dream;
Yet me they charm, whate'er the theme,
My Mary!

Thy silver locks, once auburn bright,
Are still more lovely in my sight
Than golden beams of orient light,
My Mary!

For could I view nor them nor thee,
What sight worth seeing could I see?
The sun would rise in vain for me,
My Mary!

Partakers of thy sad decline,
Thy hands their little force resign;
Yet, gently prest, press gently mine,
My Mary!

Such feebleness of limbs thou prov'st
That now at every step thou mov'st
Upheld by two; yet still thou lov'st,
My Mary!

And still to love, though prest with ill,
In wintry age to feel no chill,
With me is to be lovely still,
My Mary!

But ah! by constant heed I know
How oft the sadness that I show
Transforms thy smiles to looks of woe,
My Mary!

And should my future lot be cast
With much resemblance of the past,
Thy worn-out heart will break at last—
My Mary!

COWPER

To Spring

O THOU with dewy locks, who lookest down
Through the clear windows of the morning, turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!
The hills tell one another, and the listening
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned
Up to thy bright pavilions: issue forth
And let thy holy feet visit our clime!
Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumèd garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our lovesick land that mourns for thee.
O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languish'd head,
Whose modest tresses are bound up for thee.

BLAKE

To a Mountain Daisy

WEE modest crimson-tippèd flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem.
Alas! it's no thy neibor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet,
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet
Wi' spreckled breast,
When upward springing, blythe to greet
The purpling east.

stoure = dust

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
 Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent-earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield;
But thou, beneath the random bield
 O' clod or stane,
Adorns the histie stibble-field,
 Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
 And low thou lies!

BURNS

Ae Fond Kiss

AE fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

Who shall say that Fortune grieves him
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerfu' twinkle lights me,
Dark despair around benights me.

bield = shelter

histie = dry

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy;
Naething could resist my Nancy;
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted—
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, enjoyment, love and pleasure!

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee!

BURNS

My Jean

OF a' the airts the wind can blaw
I dearly like the West,
For there the bonnie lassie lives,
The lassie I lo'e best:
There wild woods grow, and rivers row,
And mony a hill between;
But day and night my fancy's flight
Is ever wi' my Jean.

I see her in the dewy flowers,
I see her sweet and fair:
I hear her in the tunefu' birds,
I hear her charm the air:

airts = directions

There's not a bonnie flower that springs
By fountain, shaw, or green,
There's not a bonnie bird that sings
But minds me o' my Jean.

O blaw ye westlin winds, blaw saft
Amang the leafy trees;
Wi' balmy gale, frae hill and dale
Bring hame the laden bees;
And bring the lassie back to me
That's aye sae neat and clean;
Ae smile o' her wad banish care,
Sae charming is my Jean.

What sighs and vows amang the knowes
Hae pass'd atween us twa!
How fond to meet, how wae to part
That night she gaed awa!
The Powers aboon can only ken
To whom the heart is seen,
That nane can be sae dear to me
As my sweet lovely Jean!

BURNS

O, wert thou in the cauld Blast

O, WERT thou in the cauld blast
On yonder lea, on yonder lea,
My plaidie to the angry airt,
I'd shelter thee, I'd shelter thee.
Or did Misfortune's bitter storms
Around thee blaw, around thee blaw,
Thy bield should be my bosom,
To share it a', to share it a'.

Or were I in the wildest waste,
Sae black and bare, sae black and bare,
The desert were a paradise,
If thou wert there, if thou wert there.
Or were I monarch of the globe,
Wi' thee to reign, wi' thee to reign,
The brightest jewel in my crown
Wad be my queen, wad be my queen.

BURNS

To Mary in Heaven

THOU ling'ring star with less'ning ray,
That lov'st to greet the early morn,
Again thou usher'st in the day
My Mary from my soul was torn.
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That sacred hour can I forget,
Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
Where, by the winding Ayr, we met
To live one day of parting love?
Eternity cannot efface
Those records dear of transports past,
Thy image at our last embrace—
Ah! little thought we 'twas our last!

Ayr, gurgling, kiss'd his pebbled shore,
O'erhung with wild woods thickening green;
The fragrant birch and hawthorn hoar
'Twin'd amorous round the raptur'd scene;

The flowers sprang wanton to be prest,
The birds sang love on every spray,
Till too, too soon, the glowing west
Proclaim'd the speed of wingèd day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes
And fondly broods with miser care;
Time but th' impression stronger makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.
O Mary, dear departed shade!
Where is thy place of blissful rest?
See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

BURNS

For a' that and a' that

Is there, for honest poverty
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward-slave, we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure, and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that.

What tho' on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden-grey, and a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel show, and a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king of men for a' that.

A prince can mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he mauna fa' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
Their dignities, and a' that,
The pith o' sense and pride o' worth
Are higher ranks than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that,
That sense and worth o'er a' the earth
May bear the gree, and a' that.
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet for a' that,
That man to man the world o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that. BURNS

Auld Lang Syne

SHOULD auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to min'?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And auld lang syne?

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

We twa hae run about the braes,
And pu'd the gowans fine;
But we've wandered mony a weary foot
Sin' auld lang syne.

We twa hae paidl't i' the burn
Frae mornin' sun till dine;
But seas between us braid hae roared
Sin' auld lang syne.

And there's a hand, my trusty fiere,
And gie's a hand o' thine!
And we'll tak' a right guid-willie waught
For auld lang syne.

And surely ye'll be your pint-stowp,
And surely I'll be mine!
And we'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

Chorus

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

BURNS

Nature's Child

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, "A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown;
This child I to myself will take;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

fiere = friend

waught = draught

stowp = jug

“Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

“She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

“The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden’s form
By silent sympathy.

“The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

“And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run!
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene;
The memory of what has been,
And never more will be. WORDSWORTH

The Solitary Reaper

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No Nightingale did ever chaunt
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago;
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending:
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;
I listened, motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

WORDSWORTH

*Ode on Intimations of Immortality from
Recollections of Early Childhood*

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair;
The sunshine is a glorious birth;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
 To me alone there came a thought of grief:
 A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong.
 The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
 No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
 I hear the echoes through the mountains throng,
 The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
 And all the earth is gay;
 Land and sea
 Give themselves up to jollity,
 And with the heart of May
 Doth every beast keep holiday:—
 Thou Child of Joy,
 Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
 Shepherd-boy!
 Ye blessèd creatures, I have heard the call
 Ye to each other make; I see
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
 My heart is at your festival,
 My head hath its coronal,
 The fullness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
 O evil day! if I were sullen
 While Earth herself is adorning,
 This sweet May-morning,
 And the children are culling
 On every side,
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,
 Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
 And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
 —But there's a tree, of many, one,

A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The pansy at my feet

Doth the same tale repeat:

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;

The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,

Hath had elsewhere its setting

And cometh from afar;

Not in entire forgetfulness,

And not in utter nakedness,

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

Shades of the prison-house begin to close

Upon the growing Boy,

But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,

He sees it in his joy;

The Youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's priest,

And by the vision splendid

Is on his way attended;

At length the Man perceives it die away

And fade into the light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;

Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,

And, even with something of a mother's mind

And no unworthy aim,

The homely nurse doth all she can

To make her foster-child, her inmate Man,

Forget the glories he hath known,

And that imperial palace whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
With light upon him from his father's eyes!
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human
 life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral;
 And this hath now his heart,
And unto this he frames his song:
 Then will he fit his tongue
To dialogues of business, love, or strife;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
The little actor cons another part,
Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
With all the persons, down to palsied age,
That life brings with her in her equipage,
 As if his whole vocation
Were endless imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity;
Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
Haunted for ever by the eternal Mind,—
 Mighty prophet! Seer blest!
 On whom those truths do rest,
Which we are toiling all our lives to find,

In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave;
Thou, over whom thy Immortality
Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
A Presence which is not to be put by;
Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest,
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—

Not for these I raise

The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised:
But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,

Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,
 To perish never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor man nor boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
 Hence, in a season of calm weather,
 Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither;
 Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty rolling waters evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
 And let the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind;
 In the primal sympathy
 Which having been must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.
And O, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks which down their channels fret
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WORDSWORTH

Character of the Happy Warrior

Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be?
—It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought:
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright:
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn;

Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care;
Who, doomed to go in company with pain,
And fear, and bloodshed, miserable train!
Turns his necessity to glorious gain;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower;
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives:
By objects, which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate;
Is placable—because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more; more able to endure,
As more exposed to suffering and distress;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
—'Tis he whose law is reason; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends;
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He labours good on good to fix, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows:
—Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means; and there will stand
On honourable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire:
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim;
And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state:
Whom they must follow; on whose head must fall,

Like showers of manna, if they come at all:
Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired;
And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need:
—He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love:—
'Tis, finally, the man, who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won:
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay
Nor thought of tender happiness betray;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,
From well to better, daily self-surpassed:
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth

For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
And leave a dead unprofitable name—
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause.
This is the happy Warrior; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

WORDSWORTH

Ode to Duty

STERN Daughter of the Voice of God!
O Duty! if that name thou love
Who art a light to guide, a rod
To check the erring, and reprove;
Thou who art victory and law
When empty terrors overawe;
From vain temptations dost set free,
And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity!

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them; who, in love and truth
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth:
Glad hearts! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not:
Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around
 them cast.

Serene will be our days and bright,
And happy will our nature be
When love is an unerring light,
And joy its own security.

And they a blissful course may hold
Ev'n now, who, not unwisely bold,
Live in the spirit of this creed;
Yet seek thy firm support, according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried,
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide,
Too blindly have reposed my trust;
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control,
But in the quietness of thought:
Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name;
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern Lawgiver! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face:
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the Stars from wrong;
And the most ancient Heavens, through Thee, are
fresh and strong.

To humbler functions, awful Power!
I call thee: I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour;
Oh let my weakness have an end!

Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice;
The confidence of reason give;
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live.

WORDSWORTH

Coronach

HE is gone on the mountain,
He is lost to the forest,
Like a summer-dried fountain,
When our need was the sorest.
The font reappearing
From the raindrops shall borrow,
But to us comes no cheering,
To Duncan no morrow!

The hand of the reaper
Takes the ears that are hoary,
But the voice of the weeper
Wails manhood in glory.
The autumn winds rushing
Waft the leaves that are searest,
But our flower was in flushing
When blighting was nearest.

Fleet foot on the correi,
Sage counsel in cumber,
Red hand in the foray,
How sound is thy slumber!
Like the dew on the mountain,
Like the foam on the river,
Like the bubble on the fountain,
Thou art gone, and for ever!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Jock o' Hazeldean

"WHY weep ye by the tide, ladie?

Why weep ye by the tide?

I'll wed ye to my youngest son,

And ye sall be his bride;

And ye sall be his bride, ladie,

Sae comely to be seen"—

But aye she loot the tears down fa'

For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"Now let this wilfu' grief be done,

And dry that cheek so pale;

Young Frank is chief of Errington

And lord of Langley-dale;

His step is first in peaceful ha',

His sword in battle keen"—

But aye she loot the tears down fa'

For Jock o' Hazeldean.

"A chain of gold ye sall not lack,

Nor braid to bind your hair;

Nor mettled hound, nor managed hawk,

Nor palfrey fresh and fair;

And you, the foremost o' them a',

Shall ride our forest queen"—

But aye she loot the tears down fa'

For Jock o' Hazeldean.

The kirk was decked at morning-tide,

The tapers glimmered fair;

The priest and bridegroom wait the bride,

And dame and knight are there.

They sought her baith by bower and ha';

The ladie was not seen!

She's o'er the Border and awa'

Wi' Jock o' Hazeldean. SIR WALTER SCOTT

Kubla Khan

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But O! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this Earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced,
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail;
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean;
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves,
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of Paradise. COLERIDGE

The Old Familiar Faces

WHERE are they gone, the old familiar faces?
I had a mother, but she died and left me,
Died prematurely in a day of horrors—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.
I have had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school days;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a Love once, fairest among women:
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man.
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly,
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my childhood,
Earth seemed a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces.

How some they have died, and some they have left me,
And some are taken from me; all are departed;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

CHARLES LAMB

Rose Aylmer

Ah, what avails the sceptred race!

Ah, what the form divine!

What every virtue, every grace!

Rose Aylmer, all were thine.

Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes

May weep, but never see,

A night of memories and of sighs

I consecrate to thee.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Canadian Boat Song

From the Gaelic

LISTEN to me, as when ye heard our father
Sing long ago the song of other shores—
Listen to me, and then in chorus gather
All your deep voices, as ye pull your oars:
*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

From the lone shieling of the misty island
Mountains divide us and the waste of seas;
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

We ne'er shall tread the fancy-haunted valley,
Where 'tween the dark hills creeps the small clear
stream,

In arms around the patriarch banner rally,
Nor see the moon on royal tombstones gleam.

When the bold kindred, in the time long vanished,
Conquered the soil and fortified the keep,
No seer foretold the children would be banished,
That a degenerate lord might boast his sheep.

Come foreign rage—let discord burst in slaughter—
O then for clansmen true and stern claymore!
The hearts that would have given their blood like water
Beat heavily beyond the Atlantic roar.
*Fair these broad meads—these hoary woods are grand;
But we are exiles from our fathers' land.*

Hame, Hame, Hame

HAME, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
O hame, hame, hame to my ain countrie!

When the flower is i' the bud and the leaf is on the tree,
The larks shall sing me hame in my ain countrie.
Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
O hame, hame, hame to my ain countrie!

The green leaf o' loyaltie's begun for to fa',
The bonnie white rose it is withering an' a';
But I'll water 't wi' the blude of usurping tyrannie,
An' green it will grow in my ain countrie.

O, there's nocht now frae ruin my country can save
But the keys o' kind heaven to open the grave,
That a' the noble martyrs wha died for loyaltie
May rise again and fight for their ain countrie.

The great are now gane, a' wha ventured to save;
The new grass is springing on the top o' their grave;
But the sun thro' the mirk blinks blythe in my e'e,
"I'll shine on ye yet in yere ain countrie."

Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be,
Hame, hame, hame to my ain countrie!

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM

The Isles of Greece

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And, musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
For, standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must we but weep o'er days more blest?
Must we but blush? Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer:—"Let one living head,
But one, arise—we come, we come!"
'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain! Strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold Bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet—
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock and Parga's shore
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells!
In native swords and native ranks
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force and Latin fraud
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep,
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep:
There, swan-like, let me sing and die.
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

BYRON

Time

UNFATHOMABLE Sea! whose waves are years,
Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woe
Are brackish with the salt of human tears!

Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow
Claspest the limits of mortality,
And sick of prey, yet howling on for more,
Vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore;
Treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm,
Who shall put forth on thee,
Unfathomable Sea?

SHELLEY

To Night

SWIFTLY walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!

Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of Day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,

And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried:
"Wouldst thou me?"

Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noon-tide bee:

"Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?"—And I replied:

"No, not thee!"

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon!

Sleep will come when thou art fled.

Of neither would I ask the boon

I ask of thee, belovèd Night—

Swift be thine approaching flight,

Come soon, soon! SHELLEY

An Ionian Isle

It is an isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise;
And, for the harbours are not safe and good,
This land would have remained a solitude
But for some pastoral people native there,
Who from the elysian, clear, and golden air
Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,—
Simple and spirited, innocent and bold.
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and foam
Kissing the sifted sands and caverns hoar;
And all the winds wandering along the shore
Undulate with the undulating tide.
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide;

And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
 As clear as elemental diamond
 Or serene morning air; and, far beyond,
 The mossy tracks made by the goats and deer
 (Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year)
 Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls
 Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls
 Illumining, with sound that never fails,
 Accompany the noonday nightingales.
 And all the place is peopled with sweet airs;
 The light clear element which the isle wears
 Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
 Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers
 And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;
 And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,
 And dart their arrowy odour through the brain,
 Till you might faint with that delicious pain.
 And every motion, odour, beam, and tone
 With that deep music is in unison,
 Which is a soul within the soul: they seem
 Like echoes of an antenatal dream.—
 It is an isle 'twixt heaven, air, earth, and sea
 Cradled and hung in clear tranquillity;
 Bright as that wandering Eden, Lucifer,
 Washed by the soft blue oceans of young air.
 It is a favoured place. Famine or blight,
 Pestilence, war, and earthquake never light
 Upon its mountain-peaks; blind vultures, they
 Sail onward far upon their fatal way.
 The wingèd storms, chanting their thunder-
 psalm
 To other lands, leave azure chasms of calm
 Over this isle, or weep themselves in dew,
 From which its fields and woods ever renew

Their green and golden immortality.
And from the sea there rise, and from the sky
There fall, clear exhalations, soft and bright,
Veil after veil, each hiding some delight,
Which sun or moon or zephyr draws aside,
Till the isle's beauty, like an unveiled bride
Glowing at once with love and loveliness,
Blushes and trembles at its own excess. SHELLEY

Ode to the West Wind

I

O WILD West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes! O thou
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The wingèd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild spirit which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, O hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of heaven and ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning! there are spread
On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might
Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: O hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lulled by the coil of his crystalline streams,
Beside a pumice isle in Baiæ's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow grey with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: O hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seemed a vision,—I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
One too like thee—tameless, and swift, and proud.

v

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth,
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind;
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

SHELLEY

Life and Victory

GENTLENESS, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance—
These are the seals of that most firm assurance

Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
And, if with infirm hand Eternity,
Mother of many acts and hours, should free

The serpent that would clasp her with its length,
These are the spells by which to re-assume
An empire o'er the disentangled doom.

To suffer woes which hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;

To defy Power which seems omnipotent;
To love and bear; to hope till hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;

Neither to change nor falter nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great, and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory!

SHELLEY

The New Hellas

THE world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,

The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn:

Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
From waves serener far;

A new Peneus rolls his fountains
Against the morning star;

Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
And loves, and weeps, and dies;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh! write no more the Tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if nought so bright may live,
All earth can take or heaven can give.

SHELLEY

Memory

MUSIC, when soft voices die,
Vibrates in the memory;
Odours, when sweet violets sicken,
Live within the sense they quicken;

Rose leaves, when the rose is dead,
Are heaped for the belovèd's bed;
And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,
Love itself shall slumber on.

SHELLEY

Love's Insecurity

WHEN the lamp is shattered,
The light in the dust lies dead;
When the cloud is scattered,
The rainbow's glory is shed;
When the lute is broken,
Sweet tones are remembered not;
When the lips have spoken,
Loved accents are soon forgot.
As music and splendour
Survive not the lamp and the lute,
The heart's echoes render
No song when the spirit is mute—
No song but sad dirges,
Like the wind through a ruined cell,
Or the mournful surges
That ring the dead seaman's knell.
When hearts have once mingled,
Love first leaves the well-built nest;
The weak one is singled
To endure what it once possessed.
O Love, who bewailest
The frailty of all things here,
Why choose you the frailest
For your cradle, your home, and your bier?
Its passions will rock thee,
As the storms rock the ravens on high:
Bright reason will mock thee,
Like the sun from a wintry sky.
From thy nest every rafter
Will rot, and thine eagle home
Leave thee naked to laughter,
When leaves fall and cold winds come. SHELLEY

Ode to a Nightingale

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage that hath been
Cooled a long age in the deep-delvèd earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stainèd mouth!
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim;

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs;
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer
eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self.
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fabled to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep? KEATS

Ode on a Grecian Urn

THOU still unravished bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy
bliss,
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
Will silent be; and not a soul, to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity. Cold Pastoral!
When old age shall this generation waste,
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,
"Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. KEATS

The Forest Maid

O FAIREST of the rural maids,
Thy birth was in the forest shades;
Green boughs and glimpses of the sky
Were all that met thine infant eye.
Thy sports, thy wanderings, when a child,
Were ever in the sylvan wild;
And all the beauty of the place
Is in thy heart and on thy face.
The twilight of the trees and rocks
Is in the light shade of thy locks;
Thy step is as the wind, that weaves
Its playful way among the leaves.
Thine eyes are springs, in whose serene
And silent waters heaven is seen;
Their lashes are the herbs that look
On their young figures in the brook.
The forest depths, by foot unpressed,
Are not more sinless than thy breast;
The holy peace that fills the air
Of those calm solitudes is there.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT

The Death-Bed

WE watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours.

THOMAS HOOD

A Jacobite's Epitaph

To my true king I offered, free from stain,
Courage and faith; vain faith, and courage vain.
For him I threw lands, honours, wealth away,
And one dear hope that was more prized than they.
For him I languished in a foreign clime,
Grey-haired with sorrow in my manhood's prime;
Heard on Lavernia Scargill's whispering trees,
And pined by Arno for my lovelier Tees;
Beheld each night my home in fevered sleep,
Each morning started from my dream to weep;
Till God, who saw me tried too sorely, gave
The resting-place I asked—an early grave.

O thou, whom chance leads to this nameless stone,
From that proud country which was once mine own,
By those white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I speak like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

MACAULAY

Dark Rosaleen

O MY dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green;
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health and help and hope,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over hills and through dales
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne at its highest flood
I dashed across unseen;
For there was lightning in my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
O there was lightning in my blood!
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!

All day long, in unrest,
To and fro do I move;
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen:
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, and reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly for your weal;
Your holy delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home, in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!

My fond Rosaleen!
You'll think of me through daylight's hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
O, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew.
My dark Rosaleen!

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN

A Musical Instrument

WHAT was he doing, the great god Pan,
Down in the reeds by the river?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
With the dragon-fly on the river?

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
From the deep cool bed of the river.
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sat the great god Pan,
While turbidly flowed the river,
And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan,
(How tall it stood in the river!)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
Then notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes as he sat by the river.

“This is the way,” laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sat by the river),
“The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed.”
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed,
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan!
Piercing sweet by the river!
Blinding sweet, O great god Pan!
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man.
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the reed that grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

MRS BROWNING

My Lost Youth

OFTEN I think of the beautiful town
That is seated by the sea;
Often in thought go up and down
The pleasant streets of that dear old town,
And my youth comes back to me.
And a verse of a Lapland song
Is haunting my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."
I can see the shadowy lines of its trees,
And catch, in sudden gleams,
The sheen of the far-surrounding seas,
And islands that were the Hesperides
Of all my boyish dreams.
And the burden of that old song,
It murmurs and whispers still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."
I remember the black wharves and the slips,
And the sea-tides tossing free;
And Spanish sailors with bearded lips,
And the beauty and mystery of the ships,
And the magic of the sea.
And the voice of that wayward song
Is singing and saying still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."
I remember the bulwarks by the shore
And the forts upon the hill;
The sunrise gun, with its hollow roar,
The drum-beat repeated o'er and o'er,
And the bugle wild and shrill.

And the music of the old, old song
Throbs in my memory still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the sea-fight far away—
How it thundered o'er the tide!—
And the dead captains, as they lay
In their graves o'erlooking the tranquil bay,
Where they in battle died.

And the sound of that mournful song
Goes through me with a thrill:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

I remember the gleams and glooms that dart
Across the schoolboy's brain;
The song and the silence in the heart,
That in part are prophecies and in part
Are longings wild and vain.
And the voice of that fitful song
Sings on and is never still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

Strange to me now are the forms I meet
When I visit the dear old town;
But the native air is pure and sweet,
And the trees that o'ershadow each well-known street,
As they balance up and down,
Are singing the beautiful song,
Are sighing and whispering still:
"A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts."

LONGFELLOW

To Helen

HELEN, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn traveller bore
To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece
And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo! in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah! Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

POE

Old Ironsides

AY, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky:
Beneath it rang the battle-shout
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the open air
Shall sweep the clouds no more.

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,

No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee,—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;
Nail to her mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Stanzas from Omar Khayyám

THINK, in this battered Caravanseraï,
Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

They say the Lion and the Lizard keep
The Courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep:
And Bahram, that great Hunter—the wild Ass
Stamps o'er his Head, but cannot break his sleep.

I sometimes think that never blows so red
The Rose as where some buried Cæsar bled;
That every Hyacinth the Garden wears
Dropt in her Lap from some once lovely Head.

And this reviving Herb whose tender Green
Fledges the River-Lip on which we lean—
Ah, lean upon it lightly! for who knows
From what once lovely Lip it springs unseen!

Ah, my Belovèd, fill the Cup that clears
To-DAY of past Regrets and Future Fears:

To-morrow!—Why, To-morrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Seven thousand Years.

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

And we, that now make merry in the Room
They left, and Summer dresses in new bloom,
Ourselves must we beneath the Couch of Earth
Descend—ourselves to make a Couch—for whom?

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;

Dust unto dust, and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End!

EDWARD FITZGERALD

Ulysses

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an agèd wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.
I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees: all times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vext the dim sea: I am become a name;
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments,

Myself not least, but honoured of them all;
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy.
I am a part of all that I have met;
Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravelled world, whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life. Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard myself,
And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought.

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the sceptre and the isle—
Well-loved of me, discerning to fulfil
This labour, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and thro' soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good.
Most blameless is he, centred in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail
In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine.

There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail:
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mariners,
Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and thought
with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took

The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Free hearts, free foreheads—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honour and his toil;
Death closes all: but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks:
The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.

TENNYSON

Sir Galahad

MY good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten,
Because my heart is pure.
The shattering trumpet shrilleth high,
The hard brands shiver on the steel,
The splintered spear-shafts crack and fly,
The horse and rider reel:

They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
And when the tide of combat stands,
Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands.

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favours fall!
For them I battle till the end,
To save from shame and thrall:
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bowed in crypt and shrine:
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine.
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill;
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will.

When down the stormy crescent goes,
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns:
Then by some secret shrine I ride;
I hear a voice, but none are there;
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair.
Fair gleams the snowy altar-cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings,
And solemn chaunts resound between.

Sometimes on lonely mountain-meres
I find a magic bark;
I leap on board: no helmsman steers:
I float till all is dark.

A gentle sound, an awful light!

Three angels bear the holy Grail:
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail.

Ah, blessed vision! blood of God!

My spirit beats her mortal bars,
As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star-like mingles with the stars.

When on my goodly charger borne

Thro' dreaming towns I go,
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow.
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail;
But o'er the dark a glory spreads,
And gilds the driving hail.

I leave the plain, I climb the height;
No branchy thicket shelter yields;
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields.

A maiden knight—to me is given

Such hope, I know not fear;
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here.
I muse on joy that will not cease,
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odours haunt my dreams;
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armour that I wear,
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touched, are turned to finest air.

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain-walls
A rolling organ-harmony
Swells up, and shakes and falls.
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear:
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near."
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange;
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All-armed I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail.

TENNYSON

A Prayer

WE sailed wherever ship could sail,
We founded many a mighty state;
Pray God our greatness may not fail
Thro' craven fears of being great.

TENNYSON

O Swallow, Swallow

O SWALLOW, Swallow, flying, flying South,
Fly to her, and fall upon her gilded eaves,
And tell her, tell her, what I tell to thee.

O tell her, Swallow, thou that knowest each,
That bright and fierce and fickle is the South,
And dark and true and tender is the North.

O Swallow, Swallow, if I could follow, and light
Upon her lattice, I would pipe and trill,
And cheep and twitter twenty million loves.

O were I thou that she might take me in,
And lay me on her bosom, and her heart
Would rock the snowy cradle till I died.

Why lingereth she to clothe her heart with love,
Delaying as the tender ash delays
To clothe herself, when all the woods are green?

O tell her, Swallow, that thy brood is flown:
Say to her, I do but wanton in the South,
But in the North long since my nest is made.

O tell her, brief is life, but love is long,
And brief the sun of summer in the North,
And brief the moon of beauty in the South.

O Swallow, flying from the golden woods,
Fly to her, and pipe and woo her, and make her mine,
And tell her, tell her, that I follow thee. TENNYSON

A small sweet Idyl

COME down, O maid, from yonder mountain height:
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendour of the hills?
But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease
To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
To sit a star upon the sparkling spire;
And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
For Love is of the valley, come thou down
And find him; by the happy threshold, he,
Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
Or foxlike in the vine; nor cares to walk
With Death and Morning on the silver horns,

Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
To roll the torrent out of dusky doors:
But follow; let the torrent dance thee down
To find him in the valley; let the wild
Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
That like a broken purpose waste in air:
So waste not thou; but come; for all the vales
Await thee; azure pillars of the hearth
Arise to thee; the children call, and I
Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet;
Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees. TENNYSON

Come into the garden, Maud

COME into the garden, Maud,
For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
And the musk of the rose is blown.
For a breeze of morning moves,
And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
To faint in his light, and to die.

All night have the roses heard
The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirred
To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
And a hush with the setting moon.

I said to the lily, "There is but one
With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?
She is weary of dance and play."
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
"For ever and ever, mine."

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clashed in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sighed for the dawn and thee.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;
She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near";
And the white rose weeps, "She is late";
The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear";
And the lily whispers, "I wait."

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

TENNYSON

Calm

CALM is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground:
Calm and deep peace on this high wold,
And on those dews that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold:
Calm and still light on yon great plain
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main:
Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall;
And in my heart, if calm at all,
If any calm, a calm despair:
Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

TENNYSON

To Virgil

ROMAN Virgil, thou that singest
Ilion's lofty temples robed in fire,
Ilion falling, Rome arising,
wars, and filial faith, and Dido's pyre;
Landscape-lover, lord of language
more than he that sang the Works and Days,
All the chosen coin of fancy
flashing out from many a golden phrase;

Thou that singest wheat and woodland,
 tilth and vineyard, hive and horse and herd;
 All the charm of all the Muses
 often flowering in a lonely word;
 Poet of the happy Tityrus
 piping underneath his beechen bowers;
 Poet of the poet-satyr [flowers;
 whom the laughing shepherd bound with
 Chanter of the Pollio, glorying
 in the blissful years again to be,
 Summers of the snakeless meadow,
 unlaborious earth and oarless sea;
 Thou that seëst Universal
 Nature moved by Universal Mind;
 Thou majestic in thy sadness
 at the doubtful doom of human kind;
 Light among the vanished ages;
 star that gildest yet this phantom shore;
 Golden branch amid the shadows,
 kings and realms that pass to rise no more;
 Now thy Forum roars no longer,
 fallen every purple Cæsar's dome—
 Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
 sound for ever of Imperial Rome—
 Now the Rome of slaves hath perished,
 and the Rome of freemen holds her place,
 I, from out the Northern Island
 sundered once from all the human race,
 I salute thee, Mantovano,
 I that loved thee since my day began,
 Wielder of the stateliest measure
 ever moulded by the lips of man. TENNYSON

Evelyn Hope

BEAUTIFUL Evelyn Hope is dead!

Sit and watch by her side an hour.

That is her bookshelf, this her bed;

She plucked that piece of geranium-flower,
Beginning to die, too, in the glass.

Little has yet been changed, I think—

The shutters are shut, no light may pass

Save two long rays thro' the hinge's chink.

Sixteen years old when she died!

Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name—

It was not her time to love: beside,

Her life had many a hope and aim,

Duties enough and little cares,

And now was quiet, now astir—

Till God's hand beckoned unawares,

And the sweet white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?

What, your soul was pure and true,

The good stars met in your horoscope,

Made you of spirit, fire and dew—

And just because I was thrice as old,

And our paths in the world diverged so wide,

Each was nought to each, must I be told?

We were fellow mortals, nought beside?

No, indeed! for God above

Is great to grant, as mighty to make,

And creates the love to reward the love,—

I claim you still, for my own love's sake!

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,

Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few—

Much is to learn and much to forget

Ere the time be come for taking you.

But the time will come,—at last it will,
When, Evelyn Hope, what meant, I shall say,
In the lower earth, in the years long still,
That body and soul so pure and gay?
Why your hair was amber, I shall divine,
And your mouth of your own geranium's red—
And what you would do with me, in fine,
In the new life come in the old one's stead.

I have lived, I shall say, so much since then,
Given up myself so many times,
Gained me the gains of various men,
Ransacked the ages, spoiled the climes;
Yet one thing, one, in my soul's full scope,
Either I missed or itself missed me—
And I want and find you, Evelyn Hope!
What is the issue? let us see!

I loved you, Evelyn, all the while;
My heart seemed full as it could hold—
There was place and to spare for the frank young smile
And the red young mouth and the hair's young gold.
So, hush,—I will give you this leaf to keep—
See, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand.
There, that is our secret! go to sleep;
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

BROWNING

My Star

ALL that I know
Of a certain star
Is, it can throw
(Like the angled spar)

Now a dart of red,
Now a dart of blue;
Till my friends have said
They would fain see, too,
My star that dartles the red and the blue!
Then it stops like a bird; like a flower, hangs furled:
They must solace themselves with the Saturn above it.
What matter to me if their star is a world?
Mine has opened its soul to me; therefore I love it.

BROWNING

God's Whisper

WELL, it is gone at last, the palace of music I reared;
Gone! and the good tears start, the praises that come
too slow;
For one is assured at first, one scarce can say that he feared,
That he even gave it a thought, the gone thing was to go.
Never to be again! But many more of the kind
As good, nay, better perchance: is this your comfort to
me?
To me, who must be saved because I cling with my mind
To the same, same self, same love, same God: ay, what
was shall be.
Therefore to whom turn I but to Thee, the ineffable
Name?
Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with
hands!
What, have fear of change from Thee who art ever the
same?
Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart that Thy
power expands?

There shall never be one lost good! What was shall live
as before;

The evil is null, is nought, is silence implying sound;
What was good shall be good, with, for evil, so much
good more;

On the earth, the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect
round.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall
exist;

Not its semblance, but itself; no beauty, nor good, nor
power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the
melodist

When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too
hard,

The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;

Enough that He heard it once: we shall hear it
by-and-by.

And what is our failure here but a triumph's evidence

For the fullness of the days? Have we withered or
agonized?

Why else was the pause prolonged but that singing might
issue thence?

Why rushed the discords in, but that harmony should
be prized?

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear;

Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and
woe:

But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;

The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians
know.

BROWNING

Parting at Morning

ROUND the cape of a sudden came the sea,
And the sun looked over the mountain's rim;
And straight was a path of gold for him,
And the need of a world of men for me.

BROWNING

Epilogue to Asolando

AT the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, im-
prisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivell
—Being—who?

One who never turned his back, but marched breast
forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would
triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry, "Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

BROWNING

To the Dandelion

DEAR common flower, that growest beside the way,
Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,

First pledge of blithesome May,
Which children pluck, and full of pride uphold,
High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they
An Eldorado in the grass have found,
Which not the rich earth's ample round

May match in wealth,—thou art more dear to me
Than all the prouder summer-blooms may be.

Gold such as thine ne'er drew the Spanish prow
Through the primeval hush of Indian seas,
Nor wrinkled the lean brow

Of age, to rob the lover's heart of ease;

'Tis the spring's largess, which she scatters now
To rich and poor alike with lavish hand,
Though most hearts never understand

To take it at God's value, but pass by
The offered wealth with unrewarded eye.

Thou art my tropics and mine Italy;
To look at thee unlocks a warmer clime;
The eyes thou givest me

Are in the heart, and heed not space or time:

Not in mid-June the golden-cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like, warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent,

His conquered Sybaris, than I, when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst.

Then think I of deep shadows on the grass,—
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,

Where, as the breezes pass,
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,—
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,

Or whiten in the wind,—of waters blue
That from the distance sparkle through
 Some woodland gap,—and of a sky above,
 Where one light cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,
 Who, from the dark old tree
Beside the door, sang cheerly all day long,
 And I, secure in childish piety,
Listened as if I heard an angel sing
With news from heaven, which he did bring
 Fresh every day to my untainted ears,
 When birds and flowers and I were happy peers.

How like a prodigal doth nature seem,
When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!
 Thou teachest me to deem
More sacredly of every human heart,
 Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam
Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret show,
Did we but pay the love we owe
 And with a child's undoubting wisdom look
 On all these living pages of God's book.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

To the Man-of-War Bird

THOU who hast slept all night upon the storm,
Waking renewed on thy prodigious pinions,
(Burst the wild storm! above it thou ascended'st,
And rested on the sky, thy slave that cradled thee,)
Now a blue point, far, far in heaven floating,
As to the light emerging here on deck I watch thee,
(Myself a speck, a point on the world's floating vast).

Far, far at sea,
After the night's fierce drifts have strewn the shore with
 wrecks,
With reappearing day as now so happy and serene,
The rosy and elastic dawn, the flashing sun,
The limpid spread of air cerulean,
Thou also reappearest.

Thou born to match the gale (thou art all wings),
To cope with heaven and earth and sea and hurricane,
Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails,
Days, even weeks untired and onward, through spaces,
 realms gyrating,
At dusk that look'st on Senegal, at morn America,
That sport'st amid the lightning-flash and thunder-cloud.
In them, in thy experiences, hadst thou my soul,
What joys, what joys were thine!

WALT WHITMAN

Star of France

1870-71

O STAR of France,
The brightness of thy hope and strength and fame,
Like some proud ship that led the fleet so long,
Beseems to-day a wreck driven by the gale, a mastless hulk,
And 'mid its teeming maddened half-drowned crowds
Nor helm nor helmsman.

Dim smitten star,
Orb not of France alone, pale symbol of my soul, its
 dearest hopes,
The struggle and the daring, rage divine for liberty,
Of aspirations toward the far ideal, enthusiast's dreams of
 brotherhood,
Of terror to the tyrant and the priest.

Star crucified—by traitors sold,
Star panting o'er a land of death, heroic land,
Strange, passionate, mocking, frivolous land.

Miserable! yet for thy errors, vanities, sins, I will not now
rebuke thee:

Thy unexampled woes and pangs have quelled them all
And left thee sacred.

In that amid thy many faults thou ever aimedst highly,
In that thou wouldst not really sell thyself, however great
the price,

In that thou surely wakedst weeping from thy drugged sleep,
In that alone among thy sisters thou, giantess, didst rend
the ones that shamed thee,

In that thou couldst not, wouldst not, wear the usual chains,
This cross, thy livid face, thy piercèd hands and feet,
The spear thrust in thy side.

O star! O ship of France, beat back and baffled long!
Bear up, O smitten orb! O ship, continue on!

Sure as the ship of all, the Earth itself,
Product of deathly fire and turbulent chaos,
Forth from its spasms of fury and its poisons,
Issuing at last in perfect power and beauty,
Onward beneath the sun following its course,
So thou, O ship of France!

Finished the days, the clouds dispelled,
The travail o'er, the long-sought extrication,
When lo! reborn, high o'er the European world,
(In gladness answering thence, as face afar to face,
reflecting ours Columbia)

Again thy star, O France, fair lustrous star,
In heavenly peace, clearer, more bright than ever,
Shall beam immortal.

WALT WHITMAN

Prayer of Columbus

A BATTERED, wrecked old man,
Thrown on this savage shore, far, far from home,
Pent by the sea and dark rebellious brows, twelve dreary
months,
Sore, stiff with many toils, sickened and nigh to death,
I take my way along the island's edge,
Venting a heavy heart.

I am too full of woe!
Haply I may not live another day;
I cannot rest, O God, I cannot eat or drink or sleep,
Till I put forth myself, my prayer, once more to Thee,
Breathe, bathe myself once more in Thee, commune with
Thee,
Report myself once more to Thee.

Thou knowest my years entire, my life,
My long and crowded life of active work, not adoration
merely;
Thou knowest the prayers and vigils of my youth,
Thou knowest my manhood's solemn and visionary
meditations,
Thou knowest how before I commenced I devoted all to
come to Thee,
Thou knowest I have in age ratified all those vows and
strictly kept them,
Thou knowest I have not once lost nor faith nor ecstasy
in Thee,
In shackles, prisoned, in disgrace, repining not,
Accepting all from Thee, as duly come from Thee.

All my emprises have been filled with Thee,
My speculations, plans, begun and carried on in thoughts
of Thee,

Sailing the deep or journeying the land for Thee;
Intentions, purports, aspirations mine, leaving results to
Thee.

O, I am sure they really came from Thee,
The urge, the ardour, the unconquerable will,
The potent, felt, interior command, stronger than words,
A message from the Heavens whispering to me even in
sleep,
These sped me on.

By me and these the work so far accomplished,
By me earth's elder cloyed and stifled lands uncloyed,
unloosed,
By me the hemispheres rounded and tied, the unknown
to the known.

The end I know not, it is all in Thee,
Or small or great I know not—haply what broad fields,
what lands,
Haply the brutish measureless human undergrowth I
know,
Transplanted there may rise to stature, knowledge
worthy Thee,
Haply the swords I know may there indeed be turn'd to
reaping-tools,
Haply the lifeless cross I know, Europe's dead cross, may
bud and blossom there.

One effort more, my altar this bleak sand;
That Thou, O God, my life hast lighted
With ray of light, steady, ineffable, vouchsafed of Thee,
Light rare untellable, lighting the very light,
Beyond all signs, descriptions, languages;
For that, O God, be it my latest word, here on my knees,
Old, poor, and paralysed, I thank Thee.

My terminus near,
The clouds already closing in upon me,
The voyage balked, the course disputed, lost,
I yield my ships to Thee.

My hands, my limbs grow nerveless,
My brain feels racked, bewildered :
Let the old timbers part, I will not part,
I will cling fast to Thee, O God, though the waves buffet
me ;
Thee, Thee at least I know.

Is it the prophet's thought I speak, or am I raving ?
What do I know of life ? what of myself ?
I know not even my own work past or present :
Dim ever-shifting guesses of it spread before me,
Of newer better worlds, their mighty parturition,
Mocking, perplexing me.

And these things I see suddenly, what mean they ?
As if some miracle, some hand divine, unsealed my eyes,
Shadowy vast shapes smile through the air and sky,
And on the distant waves sail countless ships,
And anthems in new tongues I hear saluting me.

WALT WHITMAN

Say not the struggle nought availeth

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,
The labour and the wounds are vain,
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main,

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH

The Future

A WANDERER is man from his birth.
He was born in a ship
On the breast of the river of Time;
Brimming with wonder and joy,
He spreads out his arms to the light,
Rivets his gaze on the banks of the stream.

As what he sees is, so have his thoughts been.
Whether he wakes
Where the snowy mountainous pass,
Echoing the screams of the eagles,
Hems in its gorges the bed
Of the new-born clear-flowing stream;
Whether he first sees light
Where the river in gleaming rings
Sluggishly winds through the plain;
Whether in sound of the swallowing sea—
As is the world on the banks,
So is the mind of the man.

Vainly does each, as he glides,
Fable and dream
Of the lands which the river of Time
Had left ere he woke on its breast,
Or shall reach when his eyes have been
closed.

Only the tract where he sails
He wots of; only the thoughts,
Raised by the objects he passes, are his.

Who can see the green earth any more
As she was by the sources of Time?
Who imagines her fields as they lay
In the sunshine, unworn by the plough?
Who thinks as they thought,
The tribes who then roamed on her
breast,
Her vigorous primitive sons?

What girl
Now reads in her bosom as clear
As Rebekah read, when she sat
At eve by the palm-shaded well?
Who guards in her breast
As deep, as pellucid a spring
Of feeling, as tranquil, as sure?

What bard,
At the height of his vision, can deem
Of God, of the world, of the soul,
With a plainness as near,
As flashing as Moses felt,
When he lay in the night by his flock
On the starlit Arabian waste?
Can rise and obey
The beck of the Spirit like him?

This tract which the river of Time
Now flows through with us is the plain.
Gone is the calm of its earlier shore.
Bordered by cities and hoarse
With a thousand cries is its stream.
And we on its breast, our minds
Are confused as the cries which we hear,
Changing and shot as the sights which we see.

And we say that repose has fled
For ever the course of the river of Time;
That cities will crowd to its edge
In a blacker incessanter line;
That the din will be more on its banks,
Denser the trade on its stream,
Flatter the plain where it flows,
Fiercer the sun overhead;
That never will those on its breast
See an ennobling sight,
Drink of the feeling of quiet again.

But what was before us we know not,
And we know not what shall succeed.

Haply, the river of Time—
As it grows, as the towns on its marge
Fling their wavering lights
On a wider, statelier stream—
May acquire, if not the calm
Of its early mountainous shore,
Yet a solemn peace of its own.

And the width of the waters, the hush
Of the grey expanse where he floats,
Freshening its current and spotted with foam
As it draws to the Ocean, may strike

Peace to the soul of the man on its breast—
As the pale waste widens around him,
As the banks fade dimmer away,
As the stars come out, and the night-wind
Brings up the stream
Murmurs and scents of the infinite Sea.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

Requiescat

STREW on her roses, roses,
And never a spray of yew!
In quiet she reposes;
Ah, would that I did too!

Her mirth the world required;
She bathed it in smiles of glee.
But her heart was tired, tired,
And now they let her be.

Her life was turning, turning,
In mazes of heat and sound.
But for peace her soul was yearning,
And now peace laps her round.

Her cabined, ample spirit,
It fluttered and failed for breath.
To-night it doth inherit
The vasty hall of death.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

The Last Word

CREEP into thy narrow bed,
Creep, and let no more be said!
Vain thy onset! all stands fast.
Thou thyself must break at last.

Let the long contention cease!
Geese are swans, and swans are geese.
Let them have it how they will!
Thou art tired; best be still.

They out-talked thee, hissed thee, tore thee.
Better men fared thus before thee;
Fired their ringing shot and passed,
Hotly charged—and broke at last.

Charge once more, then, and be dumb!
Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall! MATTHEW ARNOLD

Heraclitus

From the Greek

THEY told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears to
shed.

I wept as I remembered how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent him down the
sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long, long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake;
For Death, he taketh all away, but them he cannot take.

WILLIAM J. CORY

The Lark Ascending

HE rises and begins to round,
He drops the silver chain of sound,
Of many links without a break,
In chirrup, whistle, slur and shake,
All interwoven and spreading wide,
Like water-dimples down a tide
Where ripple ripple overcurls
And eddy into eddy whirls;
A press of hurried notes that run
So fleet they scarce are more than one,
Yet changingly the trills repeat
And linger ringing while they fleet,
Sweet to the quick o' the ear, and dear
To her beyond the handmaid ear,
Who sits beside our inner springs,
Too often dry for this he brings,
Which seems the very jet of earth
At sight of sun, her music's mirth,
As up he wings the spiral stair,
A song of light, and pierces air
With fountain ardour, fountain play,
To reach the shining tops of day,
And drink in everything discerned
An ecstasy to music turned,
Impelled by what his happy bill
Disperses; drinking, showering still,
Unthinking save that he may give
His voice the outlet, there to live
Renewed in endless notes of glee,
So thirsty of his voice is he,
For all to hear and all to know
That he is joy, awake, aglow;

The tumult of the heart to hear
Through pureness filtered crystal-clear,
And know the pleasure sprinkled bright
By simple singing of delight,
Shrill, irreflective, unrestrained,
Rapt; ringing, on the jet sustained
Without a break, without a fall,
Sweet-silvery, sheer lyrical,
Perennial, quavering up the chord
Like myriad dews of sunny sward
That trembling into fulness shine,
And sparkle dropping argentine;
Such wooing as the ear receives
From zephyr caught in choric leaves
Of aspens when their chattering net
Is flushed to white with shivers wet;
And such the water-spirit's chime
On mountain heights in morning's
prime,
Too freshly sweet to seem excess,
Too animate to need a stress;
But wider over many heads
The starry voice ascending spreads,
Awakening, as it waxes thin,
The best in us to him akin;
And every face, to watch him raised,
Puts on the light of children praised,
So rich our human pleasure ripens
When sweetness on sincereness pipes,
Though nought be promised from the
seas,
But only a soft-ruffling breeze
Sweep glittering on a still content,
Serenity in ravishment.

For singing till his heaven fills,
'Tis love of earth that he instils,
And ever winging up and up,
Our valley is his golden cup,
And he the wine which overflows
To lift us with him as he goes:
The woods and brooks, the sheep and
 kine,
He is, the hills, the human line,
The meadows green, the fallows brown,
The dreams of labour in the town;
He sings the sap, the quickened veins;
The wedding song of sun and rains
He is, the dance of children, thanks
Of sowers, shout of primrose-banks,
And eye of violets while they breathe;
All these the circling song will wreath,
And you shall hear the herb and tree,
The better heart of men shall see,
Shall feel celestially, as long
As you crave nothing save the song.

Was never voice of ours could say
Our inmost in the sweetest way,
Like yonder voice aloft, and link
All hearers in the song they drink.
Our wisdom speaks from failing blood,
Our passion is too full in flood,
We want the key of his wild note
Of truthful in a tuneful throat,
The song seraphically free
Of taint of personality,
So pure that it salutes the suns
The voice of one for millions,

In whom the millions rejoice
For giving their one spirit voice.

Yet men have we, whom we revere,
Now names, and men still housing here,
Whose lives, by many a battle-dint
Defaced, and grinding wheels on flint,
Yield substance, though they sing not, sweet
For song our highest heaven to greet;
Whom heavenly singing gives us new,
Enspheres them brilliant in our blue,
From firmest base to farthest leap,
Because their love of Earth is deep,
And they are warriors in accord
With life to serve, and pass reward,
So touching purest and so heard
In the brain's reflex of yon bird:
Wherefore their soul in me or mine,
Through self-forgetfulness divine,
In them, that song aloft maintains
To fill the sky and thrill the plains
With showerings drawn from human stores,
As he to silence nearer soars,
Extends the world at wings and dome,
More spacious making more our home,
Till lost on his aërial rings
In light, and then the fancy sings.

GEORGE MEREDITH

Dirge in Woods

A WIND sways the pines,
And below
Not a breath of wild air;
Still as the mosses that glow
On the flooring and over the lines
Of the roots here and there.
The pine-tree drops its dead;
They are quiet, as under the sea.
Overhead, overhead
Rushes life in a race,
As the clouds the clouds chase;
And we go,
And we drop like the fruits of the tree,
Even we,
Even so.

GEORGE MEREDITH

The Blessed Damozel

THE blessèd damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not yet quite gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
... Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face...
Nothing: the autumn-fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
Spins like a fretful midge.

Around her, lovers, newly met
'Mid deathless love's acclaims,
Spoke evermore among themselves
Their heart-remembered names;
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
 Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
 The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
 Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
 Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
 Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
 The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
 Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
 She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
 Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
 Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
 Possessed the mid-day air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
 Down all the echoing stair?)

“I wish that he were come to me,
 For he will come,” she said.
“Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
 Lord, Lord, has he not prayed?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
 And shall I feel afraid?”

“When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I’ll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
As unto a stream we will step down,
And bathe there in God’s sight.

“We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

“We two will lie i’ the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

“And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know.”

(Alas! we two, we two, thou say’st!
Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
Was but its love for thee?)

“We two,” she said, “will seek the groves
Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens, whose names
Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
Margaret and Rosalys.

“Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robcs for them
Who are just born, being dead.

“He shall fear, haply, and be dumb :
Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
Not once abashed or weak ;
And the dear Mother will approve
My pride, and let me speak.

“Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
Bowed with their aureoles ;
And angels meeting us shall sing
To their citherns and citoles.

“There will I ask of Christ the Lord
Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
Together, I and he.”

She gazed and listened and then said,
Less sad of speech than mild,—
“All this is when he comes.” She ceased.
The light thrilled towards her, filled
With angels in strong level flight.
Her eyes prayed, and she smiled.
(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
Was vague in distant spheres;
And then she cast her arms along
The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
And wept. (I heard her tears.)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Up-hill

Does the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.
But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.
Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you waiting at that door.
Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

A Song of Thanks

LET my voice ring out and over the earth,
Through all the grief and strife,
With a golden joy in a silver mirth:
Thank God for Life!

Let my voice swell out through the great abyss
To the azure dome above,
With a chord of faith in the harp of bliss:
Thank God for Love!

Let my voice thrill out beneath and above,
The whole world through:
O my Love and Life, O my Life and Love,
Thank God for you! JAMES THOMSON

William Blake

HE came to the desert of London town,
Grey miles long;
He wandered up and he wandered down,
Singing a quiet song.

He came to the desert of London town,
Mirk miles broad;
He wandered up and he wandered down,
Ever alone with God.

There were thousands and thousands of human kind
In this desert of brick and stone;
But some were deaf and some were blind,
And he was there alone.

At length the good hour came; he died,
As he had lived, alone:
He was not missed from the desert wide,—
Perhaps he was found at the Throne.

JAMES THOMSON

Love is Enough

LOVE is enough: though the World be a-waning,
And the woods have no voice but the voice of complaining,
Though the sky be too dark for dim eyes to discover
The gold-cups and daisies fair blooming thereunder,
Though the hills be held shadows, and the sea a dark
wonder,
And this day draw a veil over all deeds passed over,
Yet their hands shall not tremble, their feet shall not falter;
The void shall not weary, the fear shall not alter
These lips and these eyes of the loved and the lover.

WILLIAM MORRIS

The Message of the March Wind

FAIR now is the springtide, now earth lies beholding
With the eyes of a lover the face of the sun;
Long lasteth the daylight, and hope is enfolding
The green-growing acres with increase begun.
Now sweet, sweet it is through the land to be straying
Mid the birds and the blossoms and the beasts of the
field;
Love mingles with love, and no evil is weighing
On thy heart or mine, where all sorrow is healed.
From township to township, o'er down and by tillage
Far, far have we wandered and long was the day;
But now cometh eve at the end of the village,
Where over the grey wall the church riseth grey.
There is wind in the twilight; in the white road before us
The straw from the ox-yard is blowing about;
The moon's rim is rising, a star glitters o'er us,
And the vane on the spire-top is swinging in doubt.

Down there dips the highway, toward the bridge crossing
over

The brook that runs on to the Thames and the sea.
Draw closer, my sweet, we are lover and lover;
This eve art thou given to gladness and me.

Shall we be glad always? Come closer and hearken:
Three fields further on, as they told me down there,
When the young moon has set, if the March sky should
darken,
We might see from the hill-top the great city's glare.

Hark, the wind in the elm-boughs! From London it
bloweth,
And telleth of gold, and of hope and unrest;
Of power that helps not; of wisdom that knoweth,
But teacheth not aught of the worst and the best.

Of the rich men it telleth, and strange is the story
How they have, and they hanker, and grip far and wide;
And they live and they die, and the earth and its glory
Has been but a burden they scarce might abide.

Hark! the March wind again of a people is telling;
Of the life that they live there, so haggard and grim,
That, if we and our love amidst them had been dwelling,
My fondness had faltered, thy beauty grown dim.

This land we have loved in our love and our leisure
For them hangs in heaven, high out of their reach;
The wide hills o'er the sea-plain for them have no pleasure,
The grey homes of their fathers no story to teach.

The singers have sung and the builders have builded,
The painters have fashioned their tales of delight;
For what and for whom hath the world's book been gilded,
When all is for these but the blackness of night?

How long and for what is their patience abiding?
How oft and how oft shall their story be told,
While the hope that none seeketh in darkness is hiding,
And in grief and in sorrow the world groweth old?

But lo, the old inn, and the lights and the fire,
And the fiddler's old tune and the shuffling of feet;
Soon for us shall be quiet and rest and desire,
And to-morrow's uprising to deeds shall be sweet.

WILLIAM MORRIS

Itylus

SWALLOW, my sister, O sister swallow,
How can thine heart be full of the spring?
A thousand summers are over and dead.
What hast thou found in the spring to follow?
What hast thou found in thine heart to sing?
What wilt thou do when the summer is shed?

O swallow, sister, O fair swift swallow,
Why wilt thou fly after spring to the south,
The soft south whither thine heart is set?
Shall not the grief of the old time follow?
Shall not the song thereof cleave to thy mouth?
Hast thou forgotten ere I forget?

Sister, my sister, O fleet sweet swallow,
Thy way is long to the sun and the south;
But I, fulfilled of my heart's desire,
Shedding my song upon height, upon hollow,
From tawny body and sweet small mouth
Feed the heart of the night with fire,

I the nightingale all spring through,
O swallow, sister, O changing swallow,
All spring through till the spring be done,
Clothed with the light of the night on the dew,
Sing, while the hours and the wild birds follow,
Take flight and follow and find the sun.

Sister, my sister, O soft light swallow,
Though all things feast in the spring's guest-
chamber,
How hast thou heart to be glad thereof yet?
For where thou fliest I shall not follow,
Till life forget and death remember,
Till thou remember and I forget.

Swallow, my sister, O singing swallow,
I know not how thou hast heart to sing.
Hast thou the heart? is it all past over?
Thy lord the summer is good to follow,
And fair the feet of thy lover the spring;
But what wilt thou say to the spring thy lover?

O swallow, sister, O fleeting swallow,
My heart in me is a molten ember,
And over my head the waves have met.
But thou wouldst tarry or I would follow,
Could I forget or thou remember,
Couldst thou remember and I forget.

O sweet stray sister, O shifting swallow,
The heart's division divideth us.
Thy heart is light as a leaf of a tree;
But mine goes forth among sea-gulfs hollow
To the place of the slaying of Itylus,
The feast of Daulis, the Thracian sea.

O swallow, sister, O rapid swallow,
I pray thee sing not a little space.
Are not the roofs and the lintels wet?
The woven web that was plain to follow,
The small slain body, the flower-like face,
Can I remember if thou forget?

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten!
The hands that cling and the feet that follow,
The voice of the child's blood crying yet
Who hath remembered me? who hath forgotten?
Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,
But the world shall end when I forget.

SWINBURNE

A Match

IF love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf,
Our lives would grow together
In sad or singing weather,
Blown fields or flowerful closes,
Green pleasure or grey grief;
If love were what the rose is,
And I were like the leaf.

If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune,
With double sound and single
Delight our lips would mingle,
With kisses glad as birds are
That get sweet rain at noon;
If I were what the words are,
And love were like the tune.

If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death,
We'd shine and snow together
Ere March made sweet the weather
With daffodil and starling
And hours of fruitful breath;
If you were life, my darling,
And I your love were death.

If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy,
We'd play for lives and seasons
With loving looks and treasons
And tears of night and morrow
And laughs of maid and boy;
If you were thrall to sorrow,
And I were page to joy.

If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May,
We'd throw with leaves for hours
And draw for days with flowers,
Till day like night were shady
And night were bright like day;
If you were April's lady,
And I were lord in May.

If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain,
We'd hunt down love together,
Pluck out his flying-feather,
And teach his feet a measure,
And find his mouth a rein;
If you were queen of pleasure,
And I were king of pain.

SWINBURNE

The Oblation

Ask nothing more of me, sweet;
All I can give you I give.
Heart of my heart, were it more,
More would be laid at your feet:
Love that should help you to live,
Song that should spur you to soar.

All things were nothing to give
Once to have sense of you more,
Touch you and taste of you, sweet,
Think you and breathe you and live,
Swept of your wings as they soar,
Trodden by chance of your feet.

I that have love and no more
Give you but love of you, sweet:
He that hath more, let him give;
He that hath wings, let him soar;
Mine is the heart at your feet
Here, that must love you to live.

SWINBURNE

Loch Torridon

THE dawn leapt in at my casement; and there, as I
rose, at my feet
No waves of the landlocked waters, no lake submissive
and sweet,
Soft slave of the lordly seasons, whose breath may loose it
or freeze;
But to left and to right and ahead was the ripple whose
pulse is the sea's.

From the gorge we had travelled by starlight the sunrise,
 winged and aflame,
Shone large on the live wide wavelets that shuddered
 with joy as it came;
And it came and caressed and possessed them, till panting
 and laughing with light
From mountain to mountain the water was kindled and
 stung to delight.
And the grey gaunt heights that embraced and con-
 strained and compelled it were glad,
And the rampart of rock, stark naked, that thwarted and
 barred it, was clad
With a stern grey splendour of sunrise; and scarce had I
 sprung to the sea
When the dawn and the water were wedded, the hills
 and the sky set free.
The chain of the night was broken; the waves that em-
 braced me and smiled
And flickered and fawned in the sunlight, alive, unafraid,
 undefiled,
Were sweeter to swim in than air, though fulfilled with the
 mounting morn,
Could be for the birds whose triumph rejoiced that a day
 was born.
And a day was arisen indeed for us. Years and the changes
 of years
Clothed round with their joys and their sorrows, and dead
 as their hopes and their fears,
Lie noteless and nameless, unlit by remembrance or
 record of days
Worth wonder or memory, or cursing or blessing, or
 passion or praise,
Between us who live and forget not, but yearn with
 delight in it yet,

And the day we forget not, and never may live and may
think to forget.
And the years that were kindlier and fairer, and kindled
with pleasures as keen,
Have eclipsed not with lights or with shadows the light
on the face of it seen.
For softly and surely, as nearer the boat that we gazed
from drew,
The face of the precipice opened and bade us as birds
pass through,
And the bark shot sheer to the sea through the strait of
the sharp steep cleft,
The portal that opens with imminent rampires to right
and to left,
Sublime as the sky they darken and strange as a spell-
struck dream,
On the world unconfined of the mountains, the reign of
the sea supreme,
The kingdom of westward waters, wherein when we
swam we knew
The waves that we clove were boundless, the wind on our
brows that blew
Had swept no land and no lake, and had warred not on
tower or on tree,
But came on us hard out of heaven, and alive with the
soul of the sea.

SWINBURNE

Rome
The Vatican—Sala Delle Muse

I SAT in the Muses' Hall at the mid of the day,
And it seemed to grow still, and the people to pass away,
And the chiselled shapes to combine in a haze of sun,
Till beside a Carrara column there gleamed forth One.

She looked not this nor that of those beings divine,
But each and the whole—an essence of all the Nine;
With tentative foot she neared to my halting-place,
A pensive smile on her sweet, small, marvellous face.

“Regarded so long, we render thee sad?” said she.
“Not you,” sighed I, “but my own inconstancy!
I worship each and each; in the morning one,
And then, alas! another at sink of sun.

“To-day my soul clasps Form; but where is my troth
Of yesternight with Tune: can one cleave to both?”
—“Be not perturbed,” said she. “Though apart in fame,
As I and my sisters are one, those, too, are the same.”

—“But my love goes further—to Story, and Dance, and
Hymn,
The lover of all in a sun-sweep is fool to whim—
Is swayed like a river-weed as the ripples run!”
—“Nay, wight, thou sway'st not. These are but phases
of one;

“And that one is I; and I am projected from thee,
One that out of thy brain and heart thou causest to be—
Extern to thee nothing. Grieve not, nor thyself becall;
Woo where thou wilt; and rejoice thou canst love at all!”

THOMAS HARDY

A Ballad to Queen Elizabeth
(*Of the Spanish Armada*)

KING PHILIP had vaunted his claims;
He had sworn for a year he would sack us;
With an army of heathenish names
He was coming to fagot and stack us;
Like the thieves of the sea he would track us,
And shatter our ships on the main;
But we had bold Neptune to back us,—
And where are the galleons of Spain?
His carackes were christen'd of dames
To the kirtles whereof he would tack us;
With his saints and his gilded stern-frames,
He had thought like an egg-shell to crack us:
Now Howard may get to his Flaccus,
And Drake to his Devon again,
And Hawkins bowl rubbers to Bacchus,—
For where are the galleons of Spain?
Let his Majesty hang to St James
The axe that he whetted to hack us;
He must play at some lustier games
Or at sea he can hope to out-thwack us;
To his mines of Peru he would pack us
To tug at his bullet and chain;
Alas that his Greatness should lack us!—
But where are the galleons of Spain?

Envoy

Gloriana!—the Don may attack us
Whenever his stomach be fain;
He must reach us before he can rack us, . . .
And where are the galleons of Spain?

AUSTIN DOBSON

Ode

WE are the music-makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams,
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams;
World-losers and world-forsakers,
On whom the pale moon gleams:
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world for ever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory:
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown;
And three with a new song's measure
Can trample a kingdom down.

We, in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the Old of the New World's worth;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming,
Unearthly, impossible seeming—
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their present,
And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising;
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going:
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart;
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And therefore to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling;
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted,
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
Are bringing to pass, as they may,
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
Ceaseless and sorrowless we!
The glory about us clinging
Of the glorious future we see,
Our souls with high music ringing:
O men! it must ever be
That we dwell, in our dreaming and singing,
A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning
And the suns that are not yet high,
And out of the infinite morning
Intrepid you hear us cry—
How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

Great hail! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling unknown shore;
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before;
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers,
And a singer who sings no more.

ARTHUR W. E. O'SHAUGHNESSY

Awake, my heart, to be loved

AWAKE, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake!
The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
It leaps in the sky: unrisen lustres slake
The o'ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake!

She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee;
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

And if thou tarry from her,—if this could be,—
She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee;
For thee would unashamed herself forsake:
Awake to be loved, my heart, awake, awake!

Awake! the land is scattered with light, and see,
Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree;
And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake:
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake!

Lo, all things wake and tarry and look for thee:
She looketh and saith, "O sun, now bring him to me.
Come more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
And awake my heart to be loved: awake, awake!"

ROBERT BRIDGES

A Passer-by

WHITHER, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,
That fearest nor sea rising nor sky clouding,
Whither away, fair rover, and what thy quest?
Ah! soon, when Winter has all our vales opprest,
When skies are cold and misty, and hail is hurling,
Wilt thou glide on the blue Pacific, or rest
In a summer haven asleep, thy white sails furling.

I there before thee, in the country that well thou knowest,
Already arrived am inhaling the odorous air:
I watch thee enter unerringly where thou goest,
And anchor queen of the strange shipping there,
Thy sails for awnings spread, thy masts bare;
Nor is aught from the foaming reef to the snow-capped,
grandest

Peak that is over the feathery palms more fair
Than thou, so upright, so stately, and still thou standest.

And yet, O splendid ship, unhailed and nameless,
I know not if, aiming a fancy, I rightly divine
That thou hast a purpose joyful, a courage blameless,
Thy port assured in a happier land than mine.
But for all I have given thee, beauty enough is thine,
As thou, aslant with trim tackle and shrouding,
From the proud nostril curve of a prow's line
In the offing scatterest foam, thy white sails crowding.

ROBERT BRIDGES

Gird on Thy Sword, O Man

GIRD on thy sword, O man, thy strength endue,
In fair desire thine earth-born joy renew.
Live thou thy life beneath the making sun
Till Beauty, Truth, and Love in thee are one.

Thro' thousand ages hath thy childhood run:
On timeless ruin hath thy glory been:
From the forgotten night of loves fordone
Thou risest in the dawn of hopes unseen.

Higher and higher shall thy thoughts aspire,
Unto the stars of heaven, and pass away,
And earth renew the buds of thy desire
In fleeting blooms of everlasting day.

Thy work with beauty crown, thy life with love;
Thy mind with truth uplift to God above,
For whom all is, from whom was all begun,
In whom all Beauty, Truth, and Love are one.

ROBERT BRIDGES

Almæ Matres

ST ANDREWS by the Northern Sea
A haunted town it is to me!

A little city, worn and gray,
The gray North Ocean girds it round,
And o'er the rocks, and up the bay,
The long sea-rollers surge and sound.
And still the thin and biting spray
Drives down the melancholy street,
And still endure, and still decay,
Towers that the salt winds vainly beat.
Ghost-like and shadowy they stand
Clear mirror'd in the wet sea-sand.

O, ruined chapel, long ago
We loitered idly where the tall
Fresh-budded mountain-ashes blow
Within thy desecrated wall:
The tough roots broke the tomb below,
The April birds sang clamorous,
We did not dream, we could not know
How soon the Fates would sunder us!
O, broken minster, looking forth
Beyond the bay, above the town,
O, winter of the kindly North,
O, college of the scarlet gown,
And shining sands beside the sea,
And stretch of links beyond the sand,
Once more I watch you, and to me
It is as if I touched his hand!
And therefore art thou yet more dear,
O, little city, gray and sere,
Though shrunk from thine ancient pride,
And lonely by thy lonely sea,
Than these fair halls on Isis' side,
Where Youth an hour came back to me.
A land of waters green and clear,
Of willows and of poplars tall,
And, in the spring-time of the year,
The white may breaking over all,
And Pleasure quick to come at call;
And summer rides by marsh and wold,
And Autumn with her crimson pall
About the towers of Magdalen rolled;
And strange enchantments from the past,
And memories of the friends of old,
And strong Tradition, binding fast
The flying terms with bands of gold,—

All these hath Oxford: all are dear;
But dearer far the little town,
The drifting surf, the wintry year,
The college of the scarlet gown:
St Andrews by the Northern Sea,
That is a haunted town to me!

ANDREW LANG

Wandering Willie

HOME no more home to me, whither must I wander?
Hunger my driver, I go where I must.
Cold blows the winter wind over hill and heather;
Thick drives the rain, and my roof is in the dust.
Loved of wise men was the shade of my roof-tree.
The true word of welcome was spoken in the door—
Dear days of old, with the faces in the firelight,
Kind folks of old, you come again no more.
Home was home then, my dear, full of kindly faces,
Home was home then, my dear, happy for the child.
Fire and the windows bright glittered on the moorland;
Song, tuneful song, built a palace in the wild.
Now, when day dawns on the brow of the moorland,
Lone stands the house, and the chimney-stone is cold.
Lone let it stand, now the friends are all departed,
The kind hearts, the true hearts, that loved the place of old.
Spring shall come, come again, calling up the moor-fowl,
Spring shall bring the sun and rain, bring the bees and
flowers;
Red shall the heather bloom over hill and valley,
Soft flow the stream through the even-flowing hours;
Fair the day shine as it shone on my childhood—
Fair shine the day on the house with open door;
Birds come and cry there and twitter in the chimney—
But I go for ever and come again no more.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Longing for Home

BLOWS the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain
are flying,

Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now,
Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups
are crying,
My heart remembers how!

Grey recumbent tombs of the dead in desert places,
Standing stones on the vacant wine-red moor,
Hills of sheep, and the homes of the silent vanished
races,
And winds, austere and pure:

Be it granted me to behold you again in dying,
Hills of home! and to hear again the call;
Hear about the graves of the martyrs the peewees
crying,
And hear no more at all.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

San Lorenzo Giustiniani's Mother

I HAD not seen my son's dear face
(He chose the cloister by God's grace)
Since it had come to full flower-time.
I hardly guessed its perfect prime,
That folded flower of his dear face.

Mine eyes were veiled by mists of tears
When on a day in many years
One of his Order came. I thrilled,
Facing, I thought, that face fulfilled.
I doubted, for my mists of tears.

His blessing be with me for ever!
My hope and doubt were hard to sever.
—That altered face, those holy weeds.
I filled his wallet and kissed his beads,
And lost his echoing feet for ever.

If to my son my alms were given
I know not, and I wait for Heaven.
He did not plead for child of mine,
But for another Child divine,
And unto Him it was surely given.

There is One alone who cannot change;
Dreams are we, shadows, visions strange;
And all I give is given to One.
I might mistake my dearest son,
But never the Son who cannot change.

ALICE MEYNELL

The Night has a thousand Eyes

THE night has a thousand eyes,
And the day but one;
Yet the light of the bright world dies
With the dying sun.

The mind has a thousand eyes,
And the heart but one;
Yet the light of a whole life dies,
When love is done.

F. W. BOURDILLON

Serenade

THE western wind is blowing fair
Across the dark Ægean sea,
And at the secret marble stair
My Tyrian galley waits for thee.
Come down! the purple sail is spread,
The watchman sleeps within the town,
O leave thy lily-flowered bed,
O Lady mine, come down, come down!
She will not come, I know her well,
Of lover's vows she hath no care,
And little good a man can tell
Of one so cruel and so fair.
True love is but a woman's toy,
They never know the lover's pain,
And I who love as loves a boy
Must love in vain, must love in vain.
O noble pilot, tell me true,
Is that the sheen of golden hair?
Or is it but the tangled dew
That binds the passion-flowers there?
Good sailor, come and tell me now,
Is that my Lady's lily hand?
Or is it but some gleaming prow,
Or is it but the silver sand?
No! no! 'tis not the tangled dew,
'Tis not the silver-fretted sand,
It is my own dear Lady true
With golden hair and lily hand!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
Good sailor, ply the labouring oar!
This is the Queen of life and joy
Whom we must bear from Grecian shore!

The waning sky grows faint and blue,
It wants an hour still of day;
Aboard! aboard! my gallant crew!
O Lady mine, away! away!
O noble pilot, steer for Troy!
Good sailor, ply the labouring oar!
O loved as only loves a boy!
O loved for ever evermore! OSCAR WILDE

The Last Rose

“O, WHICH is the last rose?”

A blossom of no name.

At midnight the snow came;

At daybreak a vast rose,

In darkness unfurled,

O'er-petalled the world.

Its odourless pallor

Blossomed forlorn,

Till radiant valour

Established the morn—

Till the night

Was undone

In her fight

With the sun.

The brave orb in state rose,

And crimson he shone first;

While from the high vine

Of heaven the dawn burst,

Staining the great rose

From sky-line to sky-line.

The red rose of morn

A white rose at noon turned;

But, at sunset reborn,

All red again soon burned.

Then the pale rose of noonday
Rebloomed in the night,
And spectrally white
In the light
Of the moon lay.

But the vast rose
Was scentless,
And this is the reason:
When the blast rose
Relentless,
And brought in due season
The snow-rose, the last rose
Congealed in its breath,
There came with it treason;
The traitor was Death.

In lee-valleys crowded,
The sheep and the birds
Were frozen and shrouded
In flights and in herds.
In highways
And byways
The young and the old
Were tortured and maddened
And killed by the cold.
But many were gladdened
By the beautiful last rose,
The blossom of no name
That came when the snow came,
In darkness unfurled—
The wonderful vast rose
That filled all the world.

JOHN DAVIDSON

The Dead at Clonmacnois

From the Irish

IN a quiet watered land, a land of roses,
Stands Saint Kiernan's city fair;
And the warriors of Erin in their famous generations
Slumber there.

There beneath the dewy hillside sleep the noblest
Of the clan of Conn,
Each below his stone with name in branching Ogham
And the sacred name thereon.

There they laid to rest the seven Kings of Tara,
There the sons of Cairbrè sleep—
Battle-banners of the Gael that in Kiernan's plain of
crosses
Now their final hosting keep.

And in Clonmacnois they laid the men of Teffia,
And right many a lord of Breagh;
Deep in the sod above Clan Creidè and Clan Conaill,
Kind in hall and fierce in fray.

Many and many a son of Conn the Hundred-Fighter
In the red earth lies at rest;
Many a blue eye of Clan Colman the turf covers,
Many a swan-white breast.

THOMAS W. ROLLESTON

Daisy

WHERE the thistle lifts a purple crown
Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—
O the breath of the distant surf!—

The hills look over on the South,
And southward dreams the sea;
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
Wise, idle, childish things.

She listen'd with big-lipped surprise,
Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine:
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins
Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way;
But there's never a bird so sweet a song
Thronged in whose throat that day!

O, there were flowers in Storrington
On the turf and on the spray;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
Was the Daisy-flower that day!

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face!
She gave me tokens three:—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,
A still word,—strings of sand!
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,
And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand,
And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end:
Their scent survives their close;
But the rose's scent is bitterness
To him that loved the rose!

She looked a little wistfully,
Then went her sunshine way:—
The sea's eye had a mist on it,
And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
She went, and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone
And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul
Was sad that she was glad;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
That is not paid with moan;
For we are born in others' pain,
And perish in our own.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Arab Love Song

THE hunchèd camels of the night¹
Trouble the bright
And silver waters of the moon.
The Maiden of the Morn will soon
Through Heaven stray and sing,
Star-gathering.
Now while the dark about our loves is strewn,
Light of my dark, blood of my heart, O come!
And night will catch her breath up and be dumb.

Leave thy father, leave thy mother
And thy brother;
Leave the black tents of thy tribe apart!
Am I not thy father and thy brother
And thy mother?
And thou—what needest with thy tribe's black tents
Who hast the red pavilion of my heart?

FRANCIS THOMPSON

Manitou

GIRDLED by Huron's throbbing and thunder,
Out on the drift and rift of its blue,
Walled by mists from the world asunder,
Far from all hate and passion and wonder,
Lieth the isle of the Manitou.

Here, where the surfs of the great Lake trample,
Thundering time-worn caverns through,
Beating on rock-coasts aged and ample,
Reareth the Manitou's mist-walled temple,
Floored with forest and roofed with blue.

¹ Cloud-shapes observed by travellers in the East

Grey crag-battlements, seared and broken,
Keep these passes for ages to come;
Never a watchword here is spoken,
Never a single sign or token,
From hands that are motionless, lips that are dumb.
Only the sun-god rideth over,
Marking the seasons with track of flame;
Only the wild-fowl float and hover,—
Flocks of clouds, whose white wings cover
Spaces on spaces without a name.
Stretches of marsh and wild lake-meadow,
Beaches that bend to the edge of the world;
Morn and even, suntime and shadow;
Wild flame of sunset over far meadow,
Fleets of white vapours sun-kissed and furled.
Year by year the ages onward
Drift, but it lieth out here alone;
Earthward the mists, and the earth-mists sunward;
Starward the days, and the nights bloom downward:
Whisper the forests, the beaches make moan.
Far from the world and its passions fleeting,
Neath quiet of noonday and stillness of star,
Shore unto shore each sendeth greeting,
Where the only woe is the surf's wild beating
That throbs from the maddened lake afar.

WILFRED CAMPBELL

Why

FOR a name unknown,
Whose fame unblown
Sleeps in the hills
For ever and aye;

For her who hears
The stir of the years
Go by on the wind
By night and day;

And heeds no thing
Of the needs of spring,
Of autumn's wonder
Or winter's chill;

For one who sees
The great sun freeze,
As he wanders a-cold
From hill to hill;

And all her heart
Is a woven part
Of the flurry and drift
Of whirling snow;

For the sake of two
Sad eyes and true,
And the old, old love
Of long ago.

BLISS CARMAN

Sheep and Lambs

ALL in the April morning,
April airs were abroad;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road;
All in an April evening
I thought on the lamb of God.

The lambs were weary and crying
With a weak human cry;
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet:
Rest for the little bodies,
Rest for the little feet.

Rest for the Lamb of God
Up on the hill-top green,
Only a cross of shame
Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
And thought on the Lamb of God.

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON

Irish Peasant Song

I TRY to knead and spin, but my life is low the while.
O, I long to be alone and walk abroad a mile!
Yet if I walk alone and think of nought at all,
Why from me that's young should the wild tears fall?

The shower-sodden earth, the earth-coloured streams,
They breathe on me awake and moan to me in dreams;
And yonder ivy fondling the broke castle-wall,
It pulls upon my heart till the wild tears fall.

The cabin door looks down a furze-lighted hill,
And far as Leighlin Cross the fields are green and still;
But once I hear the blackbird in Leighlin hedges call,
The foolishness is on me, and the wild tears fall.

LOUISE I. GUINEY

Clifton Chapel

THIS is the Chapel: here, my son,
Your father thought the thoughts of youth,
And heard the words that one by one
The touch of Life has turned to truth.
Here, in a day that is not far,
You too may speak with noble ghosts
Of manhood and the vows of war
You made before the Lord of Hosts.
To set the cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize,
To honour, while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes;
To count the life of battle good,
And dear the land that gave you birth,
And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth—
My son, the oath is yours: the end
Is His, Who built the world of strife,
Who gave His children Pain for friend,
And Death for surest hope of life.
To-day and here the fight's begun,
Of the great fellowship you're free;
Henceforth the School and you are one,
And what You are, the race shall be.
God send you fortune: yet be sure,
Among the lights that gleam and pass,
You'll live to follow none more pure
Than that which glows on yonder brass.
“*Qui procul hinc,*” the legend's writ,—
The frontier-grave is far away—
“*Qui ante diem perit:*
Sed miles, sed pro patriâ.” SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

Unmanifest Destiny

To what new fates, my country, far
And unforeseen of foe or friend,
Beneath what unexpected star,
Compelled to what unchosen end,

Across the sea that knows no beach
The Admiral of Nations guides
Thy blind obedient keels to reach
The harbour where thy future rides!

The guns that spoke at Lexington
Knew not that God was planning then
The trumpet word of Jefferson
To bugle forth the rights of men.

To them that wept and cursed Bull Run,
What was it but despair and shame?
Who saw behind the cloud the sun?
Who knew that God was in the flame?

Had not defeat upon defeat,
Disaster on disaster come,
The slave's emancipated feet
Had never marched behind the drum.

There is a Hand that bends our deeds
To mightier issues than we planned;
Each son that triumphs, each that bleeds,
My country, serves Its dark command.

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

RICHARD HOVEY

To Exiles

ARE you not weary in your distant places,
Far, far from Scotland of the mist and storm,
In drowsy airs, the sun-smite on your faces,
The days so long and warm?
When all around you lie the strange fields sleeping,
The dreary woods where no fond memories roam,
Do not your sad hearts over seas come leaping
To the highlands and the lowlands of your Home?
Wild cries the Winter, loud through all our valleys
The midnights roar, the grey noons echo back;
About the scalloped coasts the eager galleys
Beat for kind harbours from horizons black;
We tread the miry roads, the rain-drenched heather,
We are the men, we battle, we endure!
God's pity for you people in your weather
Of swooning winds, calm seas, and skies demure!
Wild cries the Winter, and we walk song-haunted
Over the hills and by the thundering falls,
Or where the dirge of a brave past is chaunted
In dolorous dusks by immemorial walls.
Though rains may beat us and the great mists blind us,
And lightning rend the pine-tree on the hill,
Yet are we strong, yet shall the morning find us
Children of tempest all unshaken still.
We wander where the little grey towns cluster
Deep in the hills, or selvedging the sea,
By farm-lands lone, by woods where wildfowl muster
To shelter from the day's inclemency;
And night will come, and then, far through the darkling,
A light will shine out in the sounding glen,
And it will mind us of some fond eye's sparkling,
And we'll be happy then.

Let torrents pour then, let the great winds rally,
Snow-silence fall or lightning blast the pine;
That light of Home shines warmly in the valley,
And, exiled son of Scotland, it is thine.
Far have you wandered over seas of longing,
And now you drowse, and now you well may weep,
When all the recollections come a-thronging
Of this old country where your fathers sleep.

They sleep, but still the hearth is warmly glowing,
While the wild Winter blusters round their land;
That light of Home, the wind so bitter blowing—
Look, look and listen, do you understand?
Love, strength, and tempest—oh, come back and share
them!
Here is the cottage, here the open door;
Fond are our hearts although we do not bare them,—
They're yours, and you are ours for evermore.

NEIL MUNRO

Scotland our Mither

SCOTLAND our Mither—this from your sons abroad,
Leavin' tracks on virgin veld that never kent a road,
Trekkin' on wi' weary feet an' faces turned fae hame,
But lovin' aye the auld wife across the seas the same.

Scotland out Mither—we left your bieldy bents
To hunt wi' hairy Esau, while Jacob kept the tents.
We've pree'd the pangs o' hunger, mair sorrow seen than
mirth,
But never niffer'd, auld wife, our rightfu' pride o' birth.

bieldy = sheltering

pree'd = felt

niffer'd = bartered

Scotland our Mither—we sow, we plant, we till,
But plagues that passed o'er Egypt light here an' work
their will.

They've harried barn an' basket till ruin claims us sure;
We'd better kept the auld craft an' herdit on the muir.

Scotland our Mither—we weary whiles and tire;
When Bad Luck helps to outspan, Regret biggs up the fire;
But still the hope uphaulds us, tho' bitter now the blast,
That we'll win to the auld hame across the seas at last.

Scotland our Mither—we've bairns you've never seen—
Wee things that turn them northward when they kneel
down at e'en;

They plead in childish whispers the Lord on high will be
A comfort to the auld wife—their granny o'er the sea.

Scotland our Mither—since first we left your side,
From Quilimane to Cape Town we've wandered far an'
wide;

Yet aye from mining camp an' town, from koppie an'
karoo,

Your sons richt kindly, auld wife, send hame their love
to you.

CHARLES MURRAY

The Wind's Message

THERE came a whisper down the Bland between the
dawn and dark,

Above the tossing of the pines, above the river's flow;
It stirred the boughs of giant gums and stalwart iron-
bark;

It drifted where the wild ducks played amid the swamps
below;

It brought a breath of mountain air from off the hills of
pine,
A scent of eucalyptus trees in honey-laden bloom;
And drifting, drifting far away along the southern line
It caught from leaf and grass and fern a subtle strange
perfume.
It reached the toiling city folk, but few there were that
heard—
The rattle of their busy life had choked the whisper
down;
And some but caught a fresh-blown breeze with scent of
pine that stirred
A thought of blue hills far away beyond the smoky
town;
And others heard the whisper pass, but could not under-
stand
The magic of the breeze's breath that set their hearts
aglow,
Nor how the roving wind could bring across the Overland
A sound of voices silent now and songs of long ago.
But some that heard the whisper clear were filled with
vague unrest;
The breeze had brought its message home, they could
not fixed abide;
Their fancies wandered all the day towards the blue hill's
breast,
Towards the sunny slopes that lie along the river-side.
The mighty rolling western plains are very fair to see,
Where waving to the passing breeze the silver myalls
stand,
But fairer are the giant hills, all rugged though they be,
From which the two great rivers rise that run along the
Bland.

myalls = Australian acacias

Oh! rocky range, and rugged spur, and river running clear
That swings around the sudden bends with swirl of
snow-white foam,
Though we, your sons, are far away, we sometimes seem
to hear
The message that the breezes bring to call the wanderers
home.
The mountain peaks are white with snow that feeds a
thousand rills,
Along the river banks the maize grows tall on virgin land,
And we shall live to see once more those sunny southern
hills,
And strike once more the bridle track that leads along
the Bland.

ANDREW BARTON PATERSON

Sussex

GOD gave all men all earth to love,
But, since our hearts are small,
Ordained for each one spot should prove
Belovèd over all;
That, as He watched Creation's birth,
So we, in godlike mood,
May of our love create our earth
And see that it is good.
So one shall Baltic pines content,
As one some Surrey glade,
Or one the palm-grove's droned lament
Before Levuka's trade.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!

Levuka = one of the Fiji Islands

trade = trade-wind

No tender-hearted garden crowns,
No bosomed woods adorn
Our blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed Downs,
But gnarled and writhen thorn—
Bare slopes where chasing shadows skim,
And, through the gaps revealed,
Belt upon belt, the wooded, dim
Blue goodness of the Weald.

Clean of officious fence or hedge,
Half-wild and wholly tame,
The wise turf cloaks the white cliff edge
As when the Romans came.
What sign of those that fought and died
At shift of sword and sword?
The barrow and the camp abide,
The sunlight and the sward.

Here leaps ashore the full Sou'west
All heavy-winged with brine,
Here lies above the folded crest
The Channel's leaden line;
And here the sea-fogs lap and cling,
And here, each warning each,
The sheep-bells and the ship-bells ring
Along the hidden beach.

We have no waters to delight
Our broad and brookless vales—
Only the dewpond on the height,
Unfed, that never fails,
Whereby no tattered herbage tells
Which way the season flies—
Only our close-bit thyme that smells
Like dawn in Paradise.

Here through the strong and shadeless days
The tinkling silence thrills;
Or little, lost, Down churches praise
The Lord who made the hills:
But here the Old Gods guard their round,
And, in her secret heart,
The heathen kingdom Wilfrid found
Dreams, as she dwells, apart.

Though all the rest were all my share,
With equal soul I'd see
Her nine-and-thirty sisters fair,
Yet none more fair than she.
Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
Black Down and Beachy Head.

I will go out against the sun
Where the rolled scarp retires,
And the Long Man of Wilmington
Looks naked toward the shires;
And east till doubling Rother crawls
To find the fickle tide,
By dry and sea-forgotten walls,
Our ports of stranded pride.

I will go north about the shaws
And the deep ghylls that breed
Huge oaks and old, the which we hold
No more than Sussex weed;
Or south where windy Piddinghoe's
Beglided dolphin veers,
And black beside wide-bankèd Ouse
Lie down our Sussex steers.

shaws = woods ghylls = glens

So to the land our hearts we give
Till the sure magic strike,
And Memory, Use, and Love make live
Us and our fields alike—
That deeper than our speech and thought,
Beyond our reason's sway,
Clay of the pit whence we were wrought
Yearns to its fellow-clay.

*God gives all men all earth to love,
But, since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
Belovèd over all.*

*Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground—in a fair ground—
Yea, Sussex by the sea!*

RUDYARD KIPLING

The White Birds

I WOULD that we were, my beloved, white birds on the
foam of the sea!
We tire of the flame of the meteor, before it can fade and flee;
And the flame of the blue star of twilight, hung low on
the rim of the sky,
Has awaked in our hearts, my beloved, a sadness that
may not die.
A weariness comes from those dreamers, dew-dabbled,
the lily and rose;
Ah, dream not of them, my beloved, the flame of the
meteor that goes,
Or the flame of the blue star that lingers hung low in the
fall of the dew:
For I would we were changed to white birds on the
wandering foam: I and you!

I am haunted by numberless islands, and many a Danaan
shore,
Where Time would surely forget us, and Sorrow come
near us no more;
Soon far from the rose and the lily, and fret of the flames
would we be,
Were we only white birds, my beloved, buoyed out on
the foam of the sea!

WILLIAM B. YEATS

I heard a Soldier

I HEARD a soldier sing some trifle
Out on the sun-dried veld alone;
He lay and cleaned his grimy rifle
Idly, behind a stone.

“If after death, love, comes a waking,
And in their camp so dark and still
The men of dust hear bugles, breaking
Their halt upon the hill,

“To me the slow and silver pealing
That then the last high trumpet pours
Shall softer than the dawn come stealing,
For, with its call, comes yours!”

What grief of love had he to stifle,
Basking so idly by his stone,
That grimy soldier with his rifle
Out on the veld, alone?

HERBERT TRENCH

Ireland

'Twas the dream of a God,
And the mould of His hand,
That you shook 'neath His stroke,
That you trembled and broke
To this beautiful land.

Here He loosed from His hold
A brown tumult of wings,
Till the wind on the sea
Bore the strange melody
Of an island that sings.

He made you all fair,
You in purple and gold,
You in silver and green,
Till no eye that has seen
Without love can behold.

I have left you behind
In the path of the past,
With the white breath of flowers,
With the best of God's hours,
I have left you at last.

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER

Oxford

OVER, the four long years! And now there rings
One voice of freedom and regret: *Farewell!*
Now old remembrance sorrows, and now sings:
But song from sorrow, now, I cannot tell.

City of weathered cloister and worn court;
Grey city of strong towers and clustering spires:
Where art's fresh loveliness would first resort;
Where lingering art kindled her latest fires!

Where on all hands, wondrous with ancient grace,
Grace touched with age, rise works of goodliest men:
Next Wykeham's art obtain their splendid place
The zeal of Inigo, the strength of Wren.

Where, at each coign of every antique street,
A memory hath taken root in stone:
There, Raleigh shone; there, toiled Franciscan feet;
There, Johnson flinched not, but endured alone.

There, Shelley dreamed his white Platonic dreams;
There, classic Landor throve on Roman thought;
There, Addison pursued his quiet themes;
There, smiled Erasmus, and there, Colet taught.

And there, O memory more sweet than all!
Lived he¹, whose eyes keep yet our passing light;
Whose crystal lips Athenian speech recall;
Who wears Rome's purple with least pride, most right.

That is the Oxford strong to charm us yet:
Eternal in her beauty and her past.
What, though her soul be vexed? She can forget
Cares of an hour: only the great things last.

Only the gracious air, only the charm,
And ancient might of true humanities,
These nor assault of man, nor time, can harm:
Not these, nor Oxford with her memories.

Together have we walked with willing feet
Gardens of plenteous trees, bowering soft lawn;
Hills whither Arnold wandered; and all sweet
June meadows, from the troubling world withdrawn;

¹ Cardinal Newman

Chapels of cedarn fragrance, and rich gloom
Poured from empurpled panes on either hand;
Cool pavements, carved with legends of the tomb;
Grave haunts, where we might dream, and understand.

Over, the four long years! And unknown powers
Call to us, going forth upon our way:
Ah! Turn we, and look back upon the towers
That rose above our lives, and cheered the day.

Proud and serene, against the sky they gleam:
Proud and secure, upon the earth they stand.
Our city hath the air of a pure dream,
And hers indeed is a Hesperian land.

Think of her so! The wonderful, the fair,
The immemorial, and the ever young:
The city sweet with our forefathers' care:
The city where the Muses all have sung.

Ill times may be; she hath no thought of time:
She reigns beside the waters yet in pride.
Rude voices cry: but in her ears the chime
Of full sad bells brings back her old springtide.

Like to a queen in pride of place, she wears
The splendour of a crown in Radcliffe's dome.
Well fare she—well! As perfect beauty fares,
And those high places which are beauty's home.

LIONEL JOHNSON

The Grey Mother

Lo, how they come to me,
Long through the night I call them—
Ah, how they turn to me.
East and South my children scatter,
North and West the world they wander,
Yet they come back to me,
Come, with their brave hearts beating,
Longing to die for me,—
Me, the grey, old, weary mother,
Throned amid the Northern waters,
Where they have died for me,
Died with their songs around me,
Girding my shores for me.
Narrow was my dwelling for them,
Homes they builded o'er the ocean,
Yet they leave all for me,
Hearing their mother calling,
Bringing their lives for me.
Up from South seas swiftly sailing,
Out from under stars I know not,
Come they to fight for me,
Sons of the sons I nurtured :
God keep them safe for me!
Long ago their fathers saved me,
Died for me among the heather ;
Now they come back to me,
Come, in their children's children—
Brave of the brave for me.
In the wilds and waves they slumber,
Deep they slumber in the deserts,

Rise they from graves for me,
Graves where they lay forgotten,
Shades of the brave for me. . . .
Yet my soul is veiled in sadness,
For I see them fall and perish,
Strewing the hills for me,
Claiming the world in dying,
Bought with their blood for me.
Hear the grey, old, Northern mother,
Blessing now her dying children,—
God keep you safe for me,
Christ watch you in your sleeping,
Where ye have died for me;
And when God's own slogan soundeth,
All the dead world's dust awaking,
Ah, will ye look for me?
Bravely we'll stand together—
I and my sons with me.

LAUHLAN MACLEAN WATT

Corrymeela

OVER here in England I'm helpin' wi' the hay,
An' I wisht I was in Ireland the livelong day;
Weary on the English hay, an' sorra take the wheat!

Och! Corrymeela an' the blue sky over it.

There's a deep dumb river flowin' by beyont the heavy
trees,

This livin' air is moithered wi' the bummin' o' the bees;
I wisht I'd hear the Claddagh burn go runnin' through
the heat

Past Corrymeela, wi' the blue sky over it.

The people that's in England is richer nor the Jews,
There's not the smallest young gossoon but thravels in his
shoes!

I'd give the pipe between me teeth to see a barefut child,
Och! Corrymeela an' the low south wind.

Here's hands so full o' money an' hearts so full o' care,
By the luck o' love! I'd still go light for all I did go bare.
"God save ye, *colleen dhas*," I said: the girl she thought me
wild.

Far Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

D'ye mind me now, the song at night is mortal hard to
raise,

The girls are heavy goin' here, the boys are ill to plase;
When one'st I'm out this workin' hive, 'tis I'll be back
again—

Ay, Corrymeela, in the same soft rain.

The puff o' smoke from one ould roof before an English
town!

For a shaugh wid Andy Feelan here I'd give a silver
crown,

For a curl o' hair like Mollie's ye'll ask the like in vain,
Sweet Corrymeela, an' the same soft rain.

MOIRA O'NEILL

On a Fallen Soldier

STREETS of the roaring town,
Hush for him, hush, be still!
He comes, who was stricken down
Doing the word of our will.

Hush! Let him have his state,
Give him his soldier's crown.
The grists of trade can wait
Their grinding at the mill,
But he cannot wait for his honour, now the trumpet has
 been blown;
Wreath pride now for his granite brow, lay love on his
 breast of stone.

Toll! Let the great bells toll
Till the clashing air is dim.
Did we wrong this parted soul?
We will make it up to him.
Toll! let him never guess
What work we set him to.
Laurel, laurel, yes;
He did what we bade him do.
Praise, and never a whispered hint but the fight he fought
 was good;
Never a word that the blood on his sword was his country's
 own heart's-blood.

A flag for the soldier's bier
Who dies that his land may live;
O banners, banners here,
That he doubt not nor misgive!
That he heed not from the tomb
The evil days draw near
When the nation, robed in gloom,
With its faithless past shall strive.
Let him never dream that his bullet's scream went wide
 of its island mark,
Home to the heart of his darling land where she stumbled
 and sinned in the dark.

WILLIAM VAUGHN MOODY

For the Fallen

WITH proud thanksgiving, a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill: Death august and royal
Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres.
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables at home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time:
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night.

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain,
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.

LAURENCE BINYON

The South Country

WHEN I am living in the Midlands,
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening;
My work is left behind;
And the great hills of the South Country
Come back into my mind.
The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea,
And it's there, walking in the high woods,
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.
The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day;
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and grey;
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.
The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the rocks
And the oldest kind of song.
But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there,
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend;
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald;
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood,
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

HILAIRE BELLOC

In Flanders Fields

IN Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die,
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields. JOHN M^cCRAE

Leisure

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?

No time to stand beneath the boughs
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

No time to see, in broad daylight,
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

WILLIAM H. DAVIES

The Prince of Sleep

I MET at eve the Prince of Sleep,
His was a still and lovely face,
He wandered through a valley steep,
Lovely in a lonely place.

His garb was grey of lavender,
About his brows a poppy-wreath
Burned like dim coals, and everywhere
The air was sweeter for his breath.

His twilight feet no sandals wore,
His eyes shone faint in their own flame,
Fair moths that gleamed his steps before
Seemed letters to his lovely name.

His house is in the mountain ways,
A phantom house of misty walls,
Whose golden flocks at evening graze,
And witch the moon with muffled calls.

Upwelling from his shadowy springs
Sweet waters shake a trembling sound,
There flit the hoot-owl's silent wings,
There hath his web the silkworm wound.

Dark in his pools clear visions lurk.
And rosy as with morning buds
Along his dales of broom and birk
Dreams haunt his solitary woods.

I met at eve the Prince of Sleep,
His was a still and lovely face,
He wandered through a valley steep,
Lovely in a lonely place.

WALTER DE LA MARE

To Iron-Founders and Others

WHEN you destroy a blade of grass,
You poison England at her roots:
Remember no man's foot can pass
Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
Where your unnatural vapours creep:
Surely the living rocks shall die
When birds no rightful distance keep.

You have brought down the firmament,
And yet no heaven is more near;
You shape huge deeds without event,
And half-made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels; your vision is
Machines for making more machines.

O, you are busied in the night,
Preparing destinies of rust;
Iron misused must turn to blight
And dwindle to a tettered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone;
But plants that spring in ruins and shards
Attend until your dream is done:
I have seen hemlock in your yards.

The generations of the worm
Know not your loads piled on their soil;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,
And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,
The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
Last priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to wake grass in every field,
Chisels men's hands to magnify.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

The Seekers

FRIENDS and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest
abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the
road.

Not for us are content, and quiet, and peace of mind,
For we go seeking a city that we shall never find.

There is no solace on earth for us—for such as we—
Who search for a hidden city that we shall never see.

Only the road and the dawn, the sun, the wind, and the
rain,
And the watch-fire under stars, and sleep, and the road
again.

We seek the City of God and the haunt where beauty
dwells,
And we find the noisy mart and the sound of burial bells.

Never the golden city, where radiant people meet,
But the dolorous town where mourners are going about
the street.

We travel the dusty road till the light of the day is dim,
And sunset shows us spires away on the world's rim.

We travel from dawn to dusk, till the day is past and by,
Seeking the Holy City beyond the rim of the sky.

Friends and loves we have none, nor wealth nor blest
abode,
But the hope of the City of God at the other end of the
road.

JOHN MASEFIELD

The Strong Man Armed

"GIFT me guerdon and grant me grace,"
Said the Lord of the North.

"Nothing I ask thee of gear or place
Ere I get me forth.

Gift one guerdon to mine and me
For the shade and the sheen."

"Ask and it shall be given unto thee,"
Said Mary the Queen.

"May I never falter the wide world through,
But stand in the gate;
May my sword bite sharp and my steel ring true
At the ford and the strait;
Bide not on bed nor dally with song
When the strife goeth keen:
This be my boon from the Gods of the Strong!"
"Be it so," said the Queen.

"May I stand in the mist and the clear and the chill
In the cycle of wars,
In the brown of the moss and the grey of the hill
With my eyes to the stars!
Gift this guerdon and grant this grace,
That I bid good e'en,
The sword in the hand and the foot to the race,
The wind in my teeth and the rain in my face!"
"Be it so," said the Queen.

JOHN BUCHAN

The Veld

CAST the window wider, sonny,
Let me see the veld,
Rolling grandly to the sunset,
Where the mountains melt,
With the sharp horizon round it,
Like a silver belt.

Years and years I've trekked across it,
Ridden back and fore,
Till the silence and the glamour
Ruled me to the core;
No man ever knew it better,
None could love it more.

There's a balm for crippled spirits
In the open view,
Running from your very footsteps
Out into the blue;
Like a waggon-track to heaven,
Straight 'twixt God and you.

There's a magic, soul-compelling,
In the boundless space,
And it grows upon you, sonny,
Like a woman's face—
Passionate and pale and tender,
With a marble grace.

There's the sum of all religion
In its mightiness;
Wingèd truths, beyond your doubting,
Close about you press.
God is greater in the open—
Little man is less.

There's a voice pervades its stillness,
Wonderful and clear;
Tongues of prophets and of angels,
Whispering far and near,
Speak an everlasting gospel
To the spirit's ear.

There's a sense you gather, sonny,
In the open air;
Shift your burden ere it break you:
God will take His share.
Keep your end up for your own sake;
All the rest's His care.

There's a spot I know of, sonny,
Yonder by the stream;
Bushes handy for the fire,
Water for the team.
By the old home outspan, sonny,
Let me lie and dream.

PERCEVAL GIBBON

The Stone

“AND will you cut a stone for him,
To set above his head?
And will you cut a stone for him—
A stone for him?” she said.

Three days before, a splintered rock
Had struck her lover dead—
Had struck him in the quarry dead,
Where, careless of the warning call,
He loitered, while the shot was fired—
A lively stripling, brave and tall,
And sure of all his heart desired...
A flash, a shock,
A rumbling fall...
And, broken 'neath the broken rock,
A lifeless heap, with face of clay,
And still as any stone he lay,
With eyes that saw the end of all.

I went to break the news to her;
And I could hear my own heart beat
With dread of what my lips might say;
But some poor fool had sped before,
And, flinging wide her father's door,
Had blurted out the news to her,
And struck her lover dead for her,
Had struck the girl's heart dead in her,
Had struck life lifeless, at a word,
And dropped it at her feet;
Then hurried on his witless way,
Scarce knowing she had heard.

And when I came, she stood alone—
A woman, turned to stone;
And, though no word at all she said,
I knew that all was known.

Because her heart was dead,
She did not sigh nor moan.
His mother wept:
She could not weep.
Her lover slept:
She could not sleep.
Three days, three nights,
She did not stir:
Three days, three nights,
Were one to her,
Who never closed her eyes
From sunset to sunrise,
From dawn to evenfall—
Her tearless, staring eyes,
That, seeing naught, saw all.

The fourth night, when I came from work,
I found her at my door.
“And will you cut a stone for him?”
She said; and spoke no more;
But followed me, as I went in,
And sank upon a chair;
And fixed her grey eyes on my face,
With still, unseeing stare.
And, as she waited patiently,
I could not bear to feel
Those still, grey eyes that followed me,
Those eyes that plucked the heart from me,
Those eyes that sucked the breath from me
And curdled the warm blood in me,

Those eyes that cut me to the bone,
And pierced my marrow like cold steel.

And so I rose, and sought a stone,
And cut it, smooth and square;
And, as I worked, she sat and watched,
Beside me, in her chair.
Night after night, by candlelight,
I cut her lover's name;
Night after night, so still and white,
And like a ghost she came,
And sat beside me, in her chair,
And watched with eyes aflame.

She eyed each stroke,
And hardly stirred;
She never spoke
A single word;
And not a sound or murmur broke
The quiet, save the mallet-stroke.

With still eyes ever on my hands,
With eyes that seemed to burn my hands,
My wincing, overwearied hands,
She watched, with bloodless lips apart,
And silent, indrawn breath;
And every stroke my chisel cut,
Death cut still deeper in her heart:
The two of us were chiselling
Together, I and death.

And when at length the job was done,
And I had laid the mallet by,
As if, at last, her peace were won,
She breathed his name, and, with a sigh,

Passed slowly through the open door;
And never crossed my threshold more.

Next night I laboured late, alone,
To cut her name upon the stone.

WILFRID GIBSON

Edinburgh

CITY of mist and rain and blown grey spaces,
Dashed with wild wet colour and gleam of tears,
Dreaming in Holyrood halls of the passionate faces
Lifted to one Queen's face that has conquered the years,
Are not the halls of thy memory haunted places?

Cometh there not as a moon (where the blood-rust
sears

Floors a-flutter of old with silks and laces),

Gliding, a ghostly Queen, thro' a mist of tears?

Proudly here, with a loftier pinnacled splendour,

Throned in his northern Athens, what spells remain
Still on the marble lips of the Wizard, and render

Silent the gazer on glory without a stain!

Here and here, do we whisper, with hearts more tender,

Tusitala wandered thro' mist and rain,

Rainbow-eyed and frail and gallant and slender,

Dreaming of pirate-isles in a jewelled main.

Up the Canongate climbeth, cleft asunder

Raggedly here, with a glimpse of the distant sea
Flashed through a crumbling alley, a glimpse of wonder:

Nay, for the City is throned on Eternity!

Hark! from the soaring castle a cannon's thunder

Closeth an hour for the world and an æon for me,

Gazing at last from the martial heights whereunder

Deathless memories roll to an ageless sea.

ALFRED NOYES

The Wild Geese

“O TELL me what was on yer road, ye roarin’ norlan’
Wind,

As ye cam’ blawin’ frae the land that’s niver frae my
mind?

My feet they traivel England, but I’m deein’ for the
north.”

“My man, I heard the siller tides rin up the Firth o’
Forth.”

“Ay, Wind, I ken them weel eneuch, and fine they fa’
an’ rise,

And fine I’d feel the creepin’ mist on yonder shore that
lies;

But tell me, ere ye passed them by, what saw ye on the
way?”

“My man, I rocked the rovin’ gulls that sail abune the
Tay.”

“But saw ye naething, leein’ Wind, afore ye cam’ to Fife?
There’s muckle lyin’ yont the Tay that’s mair to me nor
life.”

“My man, I swept the Angus braes ye hae na trod for
years.”

“O Wind, forgi’e a hameless loon that canna see for tears!”

“And far abune the Angus straths I saw the wild geese
flee,

A lang, lang skein o’ beatin’ wings, wi’ their heids towards
the sea;

And aye their cryin’ voices trailed ahint them on the
air—”

“O Wind, hae mercy, haud yer whisht, for I daurna listen
mair!”

VIOLET JACOB

A Prayer

LORD, not for light in darkness do we pray,
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,
Nor that the slow ascension of our day
Be otherwise.

Not for a clearer vision of the things
Whereof the fashioning shall make us great,
Not for remission of the peril and stings
Of time and fate.

Not for a fuller knowledge of the end
Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid,
Nor that the little healing that we lend
Shall be repaid.

Not these, O Lord. We would not break the bars
Thy wisdom sets about us; we shall climb
Unfettered to the secrets of the stars
In Thy good time.

We do not crave the high perception swift
When to refrain were well, and when fulfil,
Nor yet the understanding strong to sift
The good from ill.

Not these, O Lord. For these Thou hast revealed,
We know the golden season when to reap
The heavy-fruited treasure of the field,
The hour to sleep.

Not these. We know the hemlock from the rose,
The pure from stained, the noble from the base,
The tranquil holy light of truth that glows
On Pity's face.

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,
Across our hearts are written Thy decrees:
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
 With more than these.

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labour as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
 To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need,
Give us to build above the deep intent
 The deed, the deed. JOHN DRINKWATER

Gates of Damascus

FOUR great gates has the city of Damascus,
And four Grand Wardens, on their spears reclining,
All day long stand like tall stone men
And sleep on the towers when the moon is shining.

*This is the song of the East Gate Warden
When he locks the great gate and smokes in his garden.*

Postern of Fate, the Desert Gate, Disaster's Cavern, Fort
of Fear,
The Portal of Bagdad am I, the Doorway of Diarbekir.
The Persian dawn with new desires may net the flushing
mountain spires,
But my gaunt buttress still rejects the suppliance of those
mellow fires.
Pass not beneath, O Caravan, or pass not singing. Have
you heard
That silence where the birds are dead yet something
pipeth like a bird?

Pass not beneath! Men say there blows in stony deserts
 still a rose
 But with no scarlet to her leaf—and from whose heart no
 perfume flows.
 Wilt thou bloom red where she buds pale, thy sister rose?
 Wilt thou not fail
 When noonday flashes like a flail? Leave, nightingale,
 the Caravan!
 Pass then, pass all! Bagdad! ye cry, and down the billows
 of blue sky
 Ye beat the bell that beats to hell, and who shall thrust
 ye back? Not I.
 The sun who flashes through the head and paints the
 shadows green and red—
 The sun shall eat thy fleshless dead, O Caravan, O
 Caravan!
 And one who licks his lips for thirst with fevered eyes
 shall face in fear
 The palms that wave, the streams that burst, his last
 mirage, O Caravan!
 And one—the bird-voiced Singing-man—shall fall behind
 thee, Caravan!
 And God shall meet him in the night, and he shall sing
 as best he can.
 And one the Bedouin shall slay, and one, sand-stricken on
 the way,
 Go dark and blind; and one shall say—“How lonely is
 the Caravan!”
 Pass out beneath, O Caravan, Doom’s Caravan, Death’s
 Caravan!
 I had not told ye, fools, so much, save that I heard your
 Singing-man.

*This was sung by the West Gate's keeper
When heaven's hollow dome grew deeper.*

I am the gate toward the sea: O sailor men, pass out
from me!

I hear you high on Lebanon, singing the marvels of the
sea.

The dragon-green, the luminous, the dark, the serpent-
haunted sea,

The snow-besprinkled wine of earth, the white-and-blue-
flower foaming sea.

Beyond the sea are towns with towers, carved with lions
and lily flowers,

And not a soul in all those lonely streets to while away
the hours.

Beyond the towns, an isle where, bound, a naked giant
bites the ground:

The shadow of a monstrous wing looms on his back: and
still no sound.

Beyond the isle a rock that screams like madmen shouting
in their dreams,

From whose dark issues night and day blood crashes in a
thousand streams.

Beyond the rock is Restful Bay, where no wind breathes
or ripple stirs,

And there on Roman ships, they say, stand rows of metal
mariners.

Beyond the bay in utmost West old Solomon the Jewish
King

Sits with his beard upon his breast, and grips and guards
his magic ring;

And when that ring is stolen, he will rise in outraged
majesty,
And take the World upon his back, and fling the World
beyond the sea.

*This is the song of the North Gate's master,
Who singeth fast, but drinketh faster.*

I am the gay Aleppo Gate: a dawn, a dawn and thou art
there:

Eat not thy heart with fear and care, O brother of the
beast we hate!

Thou hast not many miles to tread, nor other foes than
fleas to dread;

Homs shall behold thy morning meal, and Hama see thee
safe in bed.

Take to Aleppo filigrane, and take them paste of apricots,
And coffee tables botched with pearl, and little beaten
brassware pots:

And thou shalt sell thy wares for thrice the Damascene
retailers' price,

And buy a fat Armenian slave who smelleth odorous and
nice.

Some men of noble stock were made: some glory in the
murder-blade:

Some praise a Science or an Art, but I like honourable
Trade!

Sell them the rotten, buy the ripe! Their heads are weak;
their pockets burn.

Aleppo men are mighty fools. Salaam Aleikum! Safe
return!

Homs, Hama: towns between Damascus and Aleppo.

*This is the song of the South Gate Holder,
A silver man, but his song is older.*

I am the Gate that fears no fall: the Mihrab of Damascus
wall,

The bridge of booming Sinai: the Arch of Allah all in all.

O spiritual pilgrim, rise: the night has grown her single
horn:

The voices of the souls unborn are half adream with
Paradise.

To Meccah thou hast turned in prayer with aching heart
and eyes that burn:

Ah, Hajji, whither wilt thou turn when thou art there,
when thou art there?

God be thy guide from camp to camp: God be thy shade
from well to well;

God grant beneath the desert stars thou hear the Prophet's
camel bell.

And God shall make thy body pure, and give thee know-
ledge to endure

This ghost-life's piercing phantom-pain, and bring thee
out to Life again.

And God shall make thy soul a Glass where eighteen
thousand Æons pass,

And thou shalt see the gleaming Worlds as men see dew
upon the grass.

And, son of Islam, it may be that thou shalt learn at
journey's end

Who walks thy garden eve on eve, and bows his head, and
calls thee Friend.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Stillness

WHEN the words rustle no more,
And the last work's done,
When the bolt lies deep in the door,
And Fire, our Sun,
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor;
When from the clock's last chime to the last chime
Silence beats his drum,
And Space with gaunt grey eyes and her brother Time
Wheeling and whispering come,
She with the mould of form and he with the loom of
rhyme:
Then twittering out in the night my thought-birds flee,
I am emptied of all my dreams;
I only hear Earth turning, only see
Ether's long bankless streams,
And only know I should drown if you laid not your
hand on me.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Music

MUSIC comes
Sweetly from the trembling string
When wizard fingers sweep
Dreamily, half asleep;
When through remembering reeds
Ancient airs and murmurs creep,
Oboe oboe following,
Flute answering clear high flute,
Voices, voices—falling mute,
And the jarring drums.

At night I heard
First a waking bird
Out of the quiet darkness sing . . .
Music comes
Strangely to the brain asleep!
And I heard
Soft, wizard fingers sweep
Music from the trembling string,
And through remembering reeds
Ancient airs and murmurs creep;
Oboe oboe following,
Flute calling clear high flute,
Voices faint, falling mute,
And low jarring drums;
Then all those airs
Sweetly jangled—newly strange,
Rich with change . . .
Was it the wind in the reeds?
Did the wind range
Over the trembling string;
Into flute and oboe pouring
Solemn music; sinking, soaring
Low to high,
Up and down the sky?
Was it the wind jarring
Drowsy far-off drums?

Strangely to the brain asleep
Music comes.

JOHN FREEMAN

Sub specie Aeternitatis

WHEN, shaping nations, the Creative Hand
Moved among causes, purposefully wise,
It wrought a starry and invisible land
And named it England: under holier skies

And in celestial darkness hid awhile,
It waits for our discovery; its glades
Constable saw, and Wordsworth, mile by mile
Treading its roads, beheld what heavenly shades

Changed and withdrew from mountains, moors, and rills:
But O what deep and supernatural sound
The silent ear encounters in those hills,
What language native to that holy ground,

Assuming all our common speech to be
A thing of wonder, awful and divine,
Authentic accents of eternity,
Heard here in Milton's, Blake's, or Shakespeare's line.

This is the heart of England; it is found
Only by such as set their souls to find
The harbours and great cities that abound
Beyond the waters of the temporal mind.

This is the truth of England; though she die
On earth, a sinful and unhappy land,
She with her sisters speaks immortally
Of all the knowledge that her eyes have scanned.

Within man's soul she dwells and hath her part,
She is inviolable, free, and strong
For ever with perfection, since her heart
Is filled with Humour, Irony, and Song.

CHARLES WILLIAMS

Into Battle

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze;
And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
And a striving evermore for these;
And he is dead who will not fight,
And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
And with the trees to newer birth;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of heaven
Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star, and the Sisters Seven,
Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

To woodland trees that stand together,
They stand to him each one a friend;
They gently speak in the windy weather;
They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, "Brother, brother,
If this be the last song you shall sing,
Sing well, for you may not sing another;
Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers;—
O patient eyes, courageous hearts!
And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of battle takes
Him by the throat and makes him blind,
Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.
The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

JULIAN GRENFELL

I have a Rendezvous with Death

I HAVE a rendezvous with Death
At some disputed barricade,
When Spring comes back with rustling shade
And apple-blossoms fill the air—
I have a rendezvous with Death
When Spring brings back blue days and fair.
It may be he shall take my hand
And lead me into his dark land
And close my eyes and quench my breath—
It may be I shall pass him still.
I have a rendezvous with Death
On some scarred slope of battered hill,
When Spring comes round again this year
And the first meadow-flowers appear.

God knows 'twere better to be deep
Pillowed in silk and scented down,
Where Love throbs out in blissful sleep,
Pulse nigh to pulse, and breath to breath,
Where hushed awakenings are dear . . .
But I've a rendezvous with Death
At midnight in some flaming town,
When Spring trips north again this year,
And I to my pledged word am true,
I shall not fail that rendezvous. ALAN SEEGER

The Tower

It was deep night, and over Jerusalem's low roofs
The moon floated, drifting through high vaporous woofs.
The moonlight crept and glistened silent, solemn, sweet,
Over dome and column, up empty, endless street;
In the closed, scented gardens the rose loosed from the
stem

Her white showery petals; none regarded them;
The starry thicket breathed odours to the sentinel palm;
Silence possessed the city like a soul possessed by calm.

Not a spark in the warren under the giant night,
Save where in a turret's lantern beamed a grave, still
light;

There in the topmost chamber a gold-eyed lamp was lit—
Marvellous lamp in darkness, informing, redeeming it!
For, set in that tiny chamber, Jesus, the blessed and
doomed,

Spoke to the lone apostles as light to men entombed;
And spreading His hands in blessing, as one soon to be
dead,

He put soft enchantment into spare wine and bread.

The hearts of the disciples were broken and full of tears,
Because their Lord, the spearless, was hedged about with
spears;

And in His face the sickness of departure had spread a gloom,
At leaving His young friends friendless.

They could not forget the tomb.
He smiled subduedly, telling, in tones soft as voice of the dove,
The endlessness of sorrow, the eternal solace of love:
And lifting the earthly tokens, wine and sorrowful bread,
He bade them sup and remember One who lived and was
dead.

And they could not restrain their weeping.

But one rose up to depart,
Having weakness and hate of weakness raging within his
heart,

And bowed to the robed assembly whose eyes gleamed
wet in the light.

Judas arose and departed: night went out to the night.

Then Jesus lifted His voice like a fountain in an ocean of
tears,

And comforted His disciples and calmed and allayed
their fears.

But Judas wound down the turret, creeping from floor
to floor,

And would fly; but one leaning, weeping, barred him
beside the door.

And he knew her by her ruddy garment and two yet-
watching men:

Mary of Seven Evils, Mary Magdalen.

And he was frightened at her. She sighed: "I dreamed him
dead.

We sell the body for silver...."

Then Judas cried out and fled

Forth into the night! . . . The moon had begun to set:
A drear, deft wind went sifting, setting the dust afret;
Into the heart of the city Judas ran on and prayed
To stern Jehovah lest his deed make him afraid.*

But in the tiny lantern, hanging as if on air,
The disciples sat unspeaking. Amaze and peace were
there.

For *His* voice, more lovely than song of all earthly birds,
In accents humble and happy spoke slow, consoling words.

Thus Jesus discoursed, and was silent, sitting upright,
and soon

Past the casement behind Him slanted the sinking moon;
And, rising for Olivet, all stared, between love and dread,
Seeing the torrid moon a ruddy halo behind his head.

ROBERT NICHOLS

Lament

WE who are left, how shall we look again
Happily on the sun or feel the rain
Without remembering how they who went
Ungrudgingly and spent
Their lives for us loved, too, the sun and rain?

A bird among the rain-wet lilac sings—
But we, how shall we turn to little things
And listen to the birds and winds and streams
Made holy by their dreams,
Nor feel the heart-break in the heart of things?

WILFRID GIBSON

SONNETS

A Bargain

My true-love hath my heart, and I have his,
By just exchange one for the other given:
I hold his dear, and mine he cannot miss;
There never was a bargain better driven.
His heart in me keeps him and me in one,
My heart in him his thoughts and senses guides:
He loves my heart, for once it was his own;
I cherish his, because in me it bides.
His heart his wound receivèd from my sight;
My heart was wounded with his wounded heart;
For as from me on him his hurt did light,
So still methought in me his hurt did smart:
Both, equal hurt, in this change sought our bliss;
My true-love hath my heart, and I have his.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

The Power of Love

WERE I as base as is the lowly plain,
And you, my love, as high as heaven above,
Yet should the thoughts of me, your humble swain,
Ascend to heaven, in honour of my love;
Were I as high as heaven above the plain,
And you, my love, as humble and as low
As are the deepest bottoms of the main,
Wheresoe'er you were, with you my love should go;
Were you the earth, dear love, and I the skies,
My love should shine on you like to the sun,
And look upon you with ten thousand eyes,
Till heaven waxed blind, and till the world were done.
Wheresoe'er I am, below, or else above you,
Wheresoe'er you are, my heart shall truly love you.

JOSHUA SYLVESTER

Parting

SINCE there's no help, come let us kiss and part—
Nay, I have done, you get no more of me ;
And I am glad, yea, glad with all my heart,
That thus so cleanly I myself can free.
Shake hands for ever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of Love's latest breath,
When, his pulse failing, Passion speechless lies,
When Faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And Innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou mightst him yet recover.

MICHAEL DRAYTON

Beauty (i)

SHALL I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimmed;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimmed.
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wanderest in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou growest:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

SHAKESPEARE

Beauty (ii)

WHEN in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they looked but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

SHAKESPEARE

Friendship

WHEN to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanished sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoanèd moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

SHAKESPEARE

Love

LET me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O no! it is an ever-fixèd mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

SHAKESPEARE

Death

DEATH, be not proud, though some have callèd thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so:
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow;
And soonest our best men with thee do go—
Rest of their bones and souls' delivery.
Thou'rt slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell;
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke. Why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And Death shall be no more: Death, thou shalt die.

DONNE

To the Lord General Cromwell

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crownèd Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath; yet much remains
To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War: new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves whose gospel is their maw.

MILTON

On the late Massacre in Piedmont

AVENGE, O Lord! thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred-fold, who, having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

MILTON

On his Blindness

WHEN I consider how my light is spent,
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?”
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies: “God doth not need
Either man’s work or his own gifts. Who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o’er land and ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

MILTON

To Mary Unwin

MARY! I want a lyre with other strings,
Such aid from Heaven as some have feigned they drew,
An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things;
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
I may record thy worth, with honour due,
In verse as musical as thou art true,
Verse that immortalizes whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a Book,
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright:
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine;
And since thou own’st that praise, I spare thee mine.

COWPER

London from Westminster Bridge

EARTH has not anything to show more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This city now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will;
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still.

WORDSWORTH

Milton

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour:
England hath need of thee: she is a fen
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

WORDSWORTH

On the Extinction of the Venetian Republic

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty.
She was a maiden City, bright and free;
No guile seduced, no force could violate;
And, when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day:
Men are we, and must grieve when even the Shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

WORDSWORTH

On the Subjugation of Switzerland

Two Voices are there; one is of the Sea,
One of the Mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
There came a Tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him; but hast vainly striven:
Thou from the Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft:
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left;
For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
That Mountain floods should thunder as before,
And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
And neither awful Voice be heard by thee!

WORDSWORTH

The Sonnet

SCORN not the Sonnet; critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours: with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains—alas, too few! WORDSWORTH

To Night

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! Creation widened in man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst flower and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE

The Nile

It flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,
And times and things, as in that vision, seem
Keeping along it their eternal stands,—
Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory
extreme
Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.

Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake. LEIGH HUNT

Chillon

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty, thou art;
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned,
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.

Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar, for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace,
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God. BYRON

On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

MUCH have I travelled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-browed Homer ruled as his demesne;
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken;
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

KEATS

Love's Sovereignty

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of every day's
Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.

MRS BROWNING

Dante

O STAR of morning and of liberty!
O bringer of the light, whose splendour shines
Above the darkness of the Apennines,
Forerunner of the day this is to be!
The voices of the city and the sea,
The voices of the mountains and the pines,
Repeat thy song, till the familiar lines
Are footprints for the thought of Italy.
Thy fame is blown abroad from all the heights,
Through all the nations, and a sound is heard
As of a mighty wind, and men devout,
Strangers of Rome, and the new proselytes
In their own language hear thy wondrous word,
And many are amazed and many doubt.

LONGFELLOW

Montenegro

THEY rose to where their sovran eagle sails,
They kept their faith, their freedom, on the height,
Chaste, frugal, savage, armed by day and night
Against the Turk; whose inroad nowhere scales
Their headlong passes, but his footstep fails,
And red with blood the Crescent reels from fight
Before their dauntless hundreds, in prone flight
By thousands down the crags and thro' the vales.
O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years,
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

TENNYSON

Edinburgh

EVEN thus, methinks, a city reared should be,
Yea, an imperial city, that might hold
Five times an hundred noble towns in fee,
And either with their might of Babel old,
Or the rich Roman pomp of empery
Might stand compare, highest in arts enrolled,
Highest in arms; brave tenement for the free,
Who never crouch to thrones, or sin for gold.

Thus should her towers be raised—with vicinage
Of clear bold hills, that curve her very streets,
As if to vindicate, 'mid choicest seats
Of art, abiding Nature's majesty;
And the broad sea beyond, in calm or rage
Chainless alike, and teaching Liberty.

ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM

Shakespeare

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask: Thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,
Spares but the cloudy border of his base
To the foiled searching of mortality;
And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
Self-schooled, self-scanned, self-honoured, self-secure,
Didst walk on earth unguessed at. Better so!
All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

For a Venetian Pastoral

By Giorgione

WATER, for anguish of the solstice:—nay,
But dip the vessel slowly,—nay, but lean
And hark how at its verge the wave sighs in
Reluctant. Hush! Beyond all depth away
The heat lies silent at the brink of day:
Now the hand trails upon the viol-string
That sobs, and the brown faces cease to sing,
Sad with the whole of pleasure. Whither stray
Her eyes now, from whose mouth the slim pipes creep
And leave it pouting, while the shadowed grass
Is cool against her naked side? Let be:
Say nothing now unto her lest she weep,
Nor name this ever. Be it as it was,—
Life touching lips with Immortality.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

The Dark Glass

NOT I myself know all my love for thee:
How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?
Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be
As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;
And shall my sense pierce love,—the last relay
And ultimate outpost of eternity?
Lo! what am I to Love, the Lord of all?
One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand,—
One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.
Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call
And veriest touch of powers primordial
That any hour-girt life may understand.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

Remember

REMEMBER me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you planned:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve;
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Love's Wisdom

Now on the summit of Love's topmost peak
Kiss we and part; no further can we go:
And better death than we from high to low
Should dwindle or decline from strong to weak.
We have found all, there is no more to seek;
All have we proved, no more is there to know;
And Time could only tutor us to eke
Out rapture's warmth with custom's afterglow.
We cannot keep at such a height as this;
And even straining souls like ours inhale
But once in life so rarefied a bliss.
What if we lingered till love's breath should fail!
Heaven of my Earth! one more celestial kiss,
Then down by separate pathways to the vale.

ALFRED AUSTIN

Cor Cordium

O HEART of hearts, the chalice of love's fire,
Hid round with flowers and all the bounty of bloom;
O wonderful and perfect heart, for whom
The lyrist liberty made life a lyre;
O heavenly heart, at whose most dear desire
Dead love, living and singing, cleft his tomb,
And with him risen and regent in death's room
All day thy choral pulses rang full choir;
O heart whose beating blood was running song,
O sole thing sweeter than thine own songs were,
Help us for thy free love's sake to be free,
True for thy truth's sake, for thy strength's sake strong,
Till very liberty make clean and fair
The nursing earth as the sepulchral sea.

SWINBURNE

The Odyssey

As one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Ææan isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine—
As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
And through the music of the languid hours
They hear like ocean on a western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

ANDREW LANG

What the Sonnet is

FOURTEEN small brodered berries on the hem
Of Circe's mantle, each of magic gold;
Fourteen of lone Calypso's tears that rolled
Into the sea, for pearls to come of them;
Fourteen clear signs of omen in the gem
With which Medea human fate foretold;
Fourteen small drops, which Faustus, growing old,
Craved of the Fiend, to water Life's dry stem.
It is the pure white diamond Dante brought
To Beatrice; the sapphire Laura wore
When Petrarch cut it sparkling out of thought;
The ruby Shakespeare hewed from his heart's core;
The dark, deep emerald that Rossetti wrought
For his own soul, to wear for evermore.

EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON

Renouncement

I MUST not think of thee; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the love that lurks in all delight—
The love of thee—and in the blue Heaven's height,
And in the dearest passage of a song.
Oh, just beyond the sweetest thoughts that throng
This breast, the thought of thee waits hidden yet bright;
But it must never, never come in sight;
I must stop short of thee the whole day long.
But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,
When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,
And all my bonds I needs must loose apart,
Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—
With the first dream that comes with the first sleep
I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

ALICE MEYNELL

At Gibraltar

ENGLAND, I stand on thy imperial ground,
Not all a stranger; as thy bugles blow,
I feel within my blood old battles flow—
The blood whose ancient founts in thee are found.
Still urging dark against the Christian bound
Wide Islam presses; well its peoples know
Thy heights that watch them wandering below.
I think how Lucknow heard their gathering sound.
I turn, and meet the cruel, turbaned face.
England! 'tis sweet to be so much thy son!
I feel the conqueror in my blood and race;
Last night Trafalgar awed me, and to-day
Gibraltar wakened; hark, thy evening gun
Startles the desert over Africa!

GEORGE EDWARD WOODBERRY

India

THREE hundred millions breathing, and not one
To leave a name, or dictate of his will
Clear-voiced, for children's children to fulfil;
But be forgotten all; remembered none!
Thus now, and ever while the ages run,
Millions of beings rise, and strive, and pass
Like morning dew upon the summer grass,
And yet have nobly suffered, nobly done.
Or it may be, before his beard is grown,
That one will leap into a Titan's throne
By huge success in mind or war, and be
Deathless until the final trump is blown,
A Buddha or a Rama, and no sea
Of time prevail to drown his memory.

JOHN ALEXANDER CHAPMAN

The Soldier

IF I should die, think only this of me:

That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be

In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,

A pulse in the eternal mind, no less

Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England
given;

Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;

And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,

In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

RUPERT BROOKE

Rupert Brooke

HE's gone.

I do not understand.

I only know

That as he turned to go

And waved his hand

In his young eyes a sudden glory shone;

And I was dazzled by a sunset glow,

And he was gone.

WILFRID GIBSON

POEMS OF PARTING

Let the Curtain fall

LET the thick curtain fall!
I better know than all
How little I have gained,
How vast the unattained.

Sweeter than any sung
My songs that found no tongue;
Nobler than any fact
My wish that failed of act.

Others shall sing the song,
Others shall right the wrong,
Finish what I begin,
And all I fail of win.

What matter I or they,
Mine or another's day,
So the right word be said
And life the sweeter made?

WHITTIER

Last Lines

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere:
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity!
Life—that in me has rest,
As I—undying Life—have power in Thee!

Vain are the thousand creeds
That move men's hearts: unutterably vain;
Worthless as withered weeds,
Or idlest froth amid the boundless main,

To waken doubt in one
Holding so fast by Thine infinity;
So surely anchored on
The steadfast rock of immortality.

With wide-embracing love
The Spirit animates eternal years,
Pervades and broods above,
Changes, sustains, dissolves, creates, and rears.

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void;
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.

EMILY BRONTË

Lights Out

I HAVE come to the borders of sleep,
The unfathomable deep
Forest where all must lose
Their way, however straight,
Or winding, soon or late;
They cannot choose.

Many a road and track
That, since the dawn's first crack,

Up to the forest brink,
Deceived the travellers,
Suddenly now blurs,
And in they sink.

Here love ends,
Despair, ambition ends,
All pleasure and all trouble,
Although most sweet or bitter,
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter
Than tasks most noble.

There is not any book
Or face of dearest look
That I would not turn from now
To go into the unknown
I must enter and leave alone
I know not how.

The tall forest towers;
Its cloudy foliage lowers
Ahead, shelf above shelf;
Its silence I hear and obey
That I may lose my way
And myself.

EDWARD THOMAS

Margaritæ Sorori

A LATE lark twitters from the quiet skies;
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, grey city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

WILLIAM E. HENLEY

Song of Farewell

DAREST thou now, O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path to
follow?

No map there, nor guide,
Nor voice sounding, nor touch of human hand,
Nor face with blooming flesh, nor lips, nor eyes, are in
that land.

I know it not, O soul,
Nor dost thou, all is a blank before us,
All waits undream'd of in that region, that inaccessible
land.

Till when the ties loosen,
All but the ties eternal, Time and Space,
Nor darkness, gravitation, sense, nor any bounds bounding
us.

Then we burst forth, we float,
In Time and Space, O soul, prepared for them,
Equal, equipt at last, (O joy! O fruit of all!) them to
fulfil, O soul.

WALT WHITMAN

Afterwards

WHEN the Present has latched its postern behind my
tremulous stay,
And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like
wings,
Delicate-filmed as new-spun silk, will the neighbours say,
“He was a man who used to notice such things”?

If it be in the dusk when, like an eyelid’s soundless blink,
The dewfall-hawk comes crossing the shades to alight
Upon the wind-warped upland thorn, a gazer may think,
“To him this must have been a familiar sight.”

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and
warm,

When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn,
One may say, “He strove that such innocent creatures
should come to no harm,

But he could do little for them; and now he is gone.”

If, when hearing that I have been stilled at last, they
stand at the door,

Watching the full-starred heavens that winter sees,
Will this thought rise on those who will meet my face no
more,

“He was one who had an eye for such mysteries”?

And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in
the gloom,
And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its out-rollings,
Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
"He hears it not now, but used to notice such things"?

THOMAS HARDY

Prospice

FEAR death?—to feel the fog in my throat,
The mist in my face,
When the snows begin, and the blasts denote
I am nearing the place,
The power of the night, the press of the storm,
The post of the foe;
Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,
Yet the strong man must go:
For the journey is done and the summit attained,
And the barriers fall,
Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,
The reward of it all.
I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,
The best and the last!
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,
And bade me creep past.
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers
The heroes of old,
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears
Of pain, darkness, and cold.
For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,
The black minute's at end,
And the elements' rage, the fiend-voices that rave,
Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,
Then a light, then thy breast,
O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,
And with God be the rest!

BROWNING

Crossing the Bar

SUNSET and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,
But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.
Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;
For though from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crossed the bar.

TENNYSON

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